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CHERRY & VIOLET,

A TALE of the GREAT PLAGUE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF 'MARY POWELL.'

[Anne Manning]

SECOND EDITION.

As I sat by myself, I talked to myself,
And thus to myself said I.

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CHAP. I.

The Reminiſcences of Miſtreſs Cherry.—The Fire, & Double Tide.—Mal-converſation.

I WONDER whether many People, on reviewing their paſt Lives, feel as I do on looking back on mine; that, had they had the ordering the outward Circumſtances connected with them beforehand, ſuch as Time, Place, Health, Sickneſs, Friends, Acquaintances, and ſuch-like Conditions, they could not have arranged them half ſo well as they have been diſpoſed for them. When I fall into a Muſe on the Paſt, the Moments fly ſo ſwiftly

 that

that I am loſt in Amazement when I find how the Time has ſlipped by while thus pleaſantly employed. And yet many of the Arrangements which were made for me by a greater Wiſdom than mine, were ſuch as at the Time were far from agreeable to me; nay, were ſometimes ſo repugnant to Fleſh and Blood as to nouriſh rebellious Thoughts, and call forth Showers of Tears. And ſtill the Proceſs went on; as I now ſee, all for my Good.

1632. My Father married my Mother in the Spring of the Year 1632: being then in the Prime of Life, a perſonable, charming-looking Man, though ſmall of Stature, and with a Noſe ſomewhat awry. In his Conditions he was ever moſt lovely; of a ſweet Temper, ſhrewd Obſervance, ſtout Heart, and lively Wit. Many,

Many, no Doubt, had read more, by reaſon of their Opportunities; but what few Books he knew, he turned to Profit, and perhaps no Man concocted his Reading into Judgment better than he; by which he became ſo judicious and oracular, as that though he could not indeed propheſy, he could preſage; and ſome of his Preſages came true and others not, but might have done ſo, had Events taken but in a very ſlight Degree a different Courſe. He knew how to ſound his Cuſtomers, and ſuck the Marrow of their Knowledge, while keeping his own Counſel: but this was his Prudence, not Puſillanimity, for I have heard it remarked by one who knew him well, that the *Trojan* Horſe was not more full of Valour than he, for ſo ſmall a Man. Being a Hair-dreſſer, this was not ſo evident

evident in him as if he had been a Soldier; but yet every Man's Life affords Occaſions, as my Father's certainly did, of ſhowing what is in him and what is not.

In Dreſs, his Taſte was exceſſive neat, and yet gaudy; ſo that on *Sundays*, when he appeared in what he called his Marigold-and-Poppy, with his Hair, which Men then wore very long, combed down in large ſmooth Curls, his laced Collar nicely ironed, his Beaver well bruſhed, and his Shoes ſhining like Coals . . . it would have been difficult to find a Grain of Fault with him, ſave that, as my Couſin *Mark* was wont to ſay, the Colours of his Suit did too much swear at one another. For my own Part, I always had an Impreſſion that he was an exceſſive well-looking Man, not out of any Prejudice, but downright

right Prepoſſeſſion; and yet my dear Mother, who I am ſure loved him truly, always ſaid to me when I alluded to the Subject, "My Dear, "the Qualities of his Perſon were "always far exceeded by thoſe of "his Mind."

Of my Couſin *Mark*, who was my Father's Apprentice, there could not be two Opinions. He was winſome, lightſome, debonair; of moſt comely Person and Aſpect: we were all very proud of him, and he of himſelf. If he had a Fault, it was thinking too much of himſelf and too little of others; but this is ſo common that I do not know I am juſtified in particularizing it. Alſo he was ſomewhat of a Coward, not in reſpect of perſonal, animal Courage, of which I ſuppoſe he had as much as the aforeſaid *Trojan* Horſe, whatever that might be; but

but morally cowardly, as to what would be thought of him by others, and dreading the Evil of the preſent Moment, and ſo forth; which Men don't think ſo bad a kind of Cowardice as the other, but I do.

But his Temper was moſt ſweet: his Manners moſt engaging. Oh! how much he came to be thought of, at length, all along the Bridge! I have no other Fault to find in him beſides thoſe already reckoned; unleſs it were a general Want of Principle, which was leſs apparent than it would have been, had it not been covered rather than ſupplied by good Feeling. But 'tis ill reckoning the Faults of one's Friends.

Of my Mother, how ſhall I say enough? She was tall, ſlender, and comely to look upon, with ſweet and quick grey Eyes. She was naturally of a high Spirit, which had

had been brought under a Curb by Divine Grace. She was kind and obliging to all, ſtirring and thrifty, yet not niggardly; ſoft-hearted to the Poor, of wonderful Propriety without the leaſt Priggiſhness, loved by her Friends, and eſpecially in her own Family. Now I have counted up the whole Houſe except our Lodger, Maſter *Blower*, and *Dolly*, the Cook.

My Father's Shop was on the eaſt Side of *London Bridge*. Over his Door hung his Sign of "*The "Lock of Hair;*" and over the Shop-front was painted in yellow Letters the following Inſcription,—

"PETER CURLING *sells all Sorts of Hair,*
"*Curled or Uncurled, Roses, Braids, Cauls,*
"*Ribbons, Weaving, Sewing-silk, Cards,*
"*and Blocks. Together with Combs, Crisp-*
"*ing-pins, Perfumery, and all other Goods*
"*made use of by Tonsors and Hairdressers,*
"*at the Lowest Prices.*"

On

On the oppoſite Side of the Way, was a Vintner's, by the Name of *Abel*, who had humourouſly ſet up *a Bell* for his Sign, and painted beneath it, "Quoth the Wag, I am "*Abel*."

Next Door to us on one Side, lived a Bookſeller and Stationer named *Benſkin*, whose Sign was the Bible and Star; and next Door to us on the other Side was a Glover named *Hugh Braidfoot*, a jolly, good-tempered Bachelor, black-haired, freſh-coloured, and ſix Feet high, whoſe Sign was the Roebuck.

1633. A few Weeks after my Birth, which was in *February*, 1633, in the Midſt of a notable hard Froſt, there broke out a moſt dreadful Fire at the north End of the Bridge, which conſumed all the Houſes on both Sides, from *St. Magnus'* Church to the firſt open Space on the Bridge.

Bridge. There was, I have heard tell, much bodily Hurt as well as Deſtruction of Property; many Perſons in precipitating themſelves from upper Stories, getting their Limbs broken. "Water! Water!" was the Cry, and all in vain, for though the *Thames* lay right under the Houſes, 'twas one great Cake of Ice, and the only Reſource was to break the Conduit Pipes that ran through the Streets leading to the Bridge, and ſweep the Water down with Brooms, to ſupply the three Engines that every one had thought would be ſuch Helps in Time of Need, but which proved very ſorry Helps indeed. In the Midſt of the Tumult and Danger, ſome Neighbours of ours that were burned out of Houſe and Home, took Refuge with us; to wit, the Wife and infant Daughter of Maſter *Samuel Armytage*,

Armytage, Haberdaſher of ſmall Wares; the Infant being, like myſelf, a Nurſling of only a few Weeks old. Theſe homeleſs Strangers did my Mother hoſpitably and Chriſtianly entertain, beſtirring herſelf more in her Care for them than in her tender Caſe it was fit ſhe ſhould have done, and putting us two Infants into one and the ſame Cradle. With our little Arms locked about one another, in an Atmoſphere of Chriſtian Love, 'twas no Wonder that little *Violet* and I conceived a Tenderneſs for each other, e'en while Sucklings, that grew with our Growth, and ſtrengthened with our Strength. As for the elder Parties, Hoſpitality on the one Side and Thankfulneſs on the other cauſed a more than common Friendlineſs to ſpring up between them from that Time forth. And when the

the Fugitives were re-eſtabliſhed in their re-built Houſes, they long had an impreſſive and ſolemnifying Remembrance of their narrow Eſcape from an awful and terrible Death.

Now, though I cannot, of courſe, remember Anything of the Fire, I have a perfect Recollection of the next notable Occurrence among us, of *the Double Tide*, which happened in my eighth Year; and how the River, after lying as ſtill as a Stone for more than an Hour, ſuddenly came foaming up from *Greenwich*, roaring, boiling, and ſplaſhing to that Degree that it was Horror to look upon. And my Father, after contemplating the Prodigy along with all the reſt, exclaimed, "Well, "Friends! you may ſay what you "will; but I, though not a ſuper-"ſtitious Man, think Something "will come of it." And did not Something

1641.

Something come of it . . or, at any Rate, after it? and were not we, that had previouſly been ſleeping on the ſtill Waters of a ſettled Government, horribly overwhelmed with a Tide of Rebellion, Anarchy, and Republicaniſm?

1640. The Year before the Double Tide, there had been much Talk in my Father's Shop, about the Earl of *Strafford* being given over to the Black Rod, which I, being of ſuch tender Years, could not well make out, but it ſeemed to carry an ill Sound with it. After that, he was taken to his Trial; and paſſed from his Priſon in the *Tower* to *Weſtminſter*, under our Bridge. We looked forth of our Windows, and diſcerned him plainly in one of the Barges, guarded by Soldiers with Partizans; and there was much Yelling and Hooting as he went through

through the Arch, which I for my Part was ſorry for, he was ſo handſome and perſonable a Gentleman. The People, however, were much incenſed againſt him; and, about three Months after the Double Tide, 1641.
there was what I may call a Double Tide of 'Prentices and tumultuous Citizens, to the Number of about ſix Thouſand, (my Couſin, *Mark Blenkinsop*, being among them,) who aſſembled themſelves in an intimidating Manner at *Weſtminſter*, many of them armed with Swords and Staves, and demanded Lord *Strafford's* Death of the Peers as they went to the Houſe.

I remember my Father, for as ſmall a Man as he was, collaring *Mark* when he came back, and dealing him one or two Blows, which made me begin to cry, and run in between them. And *Mark*, though

though a great, tall Lad of his Years, began to whimper too, which reminds me again of the *Trojan* Horſe, and the Valour that may dwell in a little Body, and the Puſillanimity that may be in a large one. And, "ſure, Uncle," ſays *Mark*, "the Earl deſerves to die, "for his" . . Malconverſation, or Malminiſtration, I forget which. And my Father replied, "Never "trouble your Head with that. "Leave the Powers that be to ſettle "their own Affairs. Fine Times, "indeed, when Barbers' 'Prentices "muſt be meddling in State-politics! "To his own Maſter, the *Earl* "ſtandeth or falleth."

Had all Men been of my Father's equable and temperate Mind, we ſhould not have fallen into the Diſorders we preſently did; wherein, no Doubt, there was much Wrong on

on both Sides. One Night we were rouſed from Sleep by Cries in the Street that "the *King* and "his Papiſts were coming to fire "the City and cut our Throats in "our Beds;" but my Father, after putting his Head forth to learn the Nature of the Tumult, drew it in again and cloſed the Window, allaying our ſomewhat ungoverned Fears with that Compoſure which it behoves every Maſter of a Family to aſſume when he can, in Seaſons of Danger or the Apprehenſion of it.

Soon there was open War between *King* and *Parliament*, which went on increaſing till the whole Country was filled with Bloodſhed and Confuſion, and only ended in a total Change of Government. We were now in a State of Fortification; for the *Lords* and *Commons*

Commons had directed that the whole City ſhould be put in a State of Defence, and that the *Lord Mayor* and Citizens ſhould trench, ſtop, and fortify all High-ways leading thereunto. Wherefore, all Entrances into *London* except five, were ſtoned and bricked up altogether; and thoſe five were made as ſtrong as could be, with Breaſt-works and Turnpikes, Muſket-proof. And all Sheds and Out-buildings outſide *London Wall*, that were near enough to be advantageous to an Enemy, were taken down; and this gave a great deal of Work to do that behoved to be done quickly; wherefore even Women and Children helped the Men in carrying Earth, Stones, &c., for, by this Time, there was in the City a pretty general Diſaffection towards

towards the *King*; and thoſe that wiſhed him well and could not get to him, found it beſt to hold their Peace.

CHAP. II.

Cherry endeavours to remember if ſhe were pretty.—A Water-party.

——AND now my Memory flies on to the Time when, I ſuppoſe, I was as happy a Girl as any on the *Bridge*. I know not whether I were pretty or not,—I rather ſuppoſe I was, but my Father praiſed me too much, and my dear Mother never praiſed me at all, ſo that I have no Clue to what was really thought of me. There's an old Saying, "Even a little Beetle "is a Beauty in the Eyes of its "Mother,"—I am bold to think that

that if I had been a little Black-beetle, I ſhould ſtill have been a Beauty in the Eyes of my Father. My Mother uſed to tell him "all "his Geeſe were Swans," which was as much as to ſay that hers were not: be that as it may, if ſhe praiſed me leſs, I always felt ſhe loved me as much as he did; and I loved her to the full as much as I loved him.

I remember coming down Stairs one *Sunday* Morning, dreſſed for Church,—(we had no Liturgy, nor Church of *England* Clergymen then, ſuch was the Will of *Parliament*,)—dreſſed in a primroſe Petticoat and graſs-green Mantua neatly bundled up behind; black Mits without a Creaſe in them for Tightneſs, white Pinners ſtarched and crimped, and a ſmall ſteeple-crowned Hat,—when *Mark*, meeting me at the Stair-foot,

Stair-foot, ſtepped out of my Way with a ſliding Bow, ſaid, "Bleſs me, how pretty we are!" and looked attentively after me. I felt aſhamed and yet elated; and thought ſomewhat more of myſelf and of him after that; yet I am not quite ſure, now, that his Speech was not ironical, after all.

Of my Friend and Schoolfellow, *Violet Armytage*, there could not be two Opinions. She was exceſſively pretty, and knew it too well: which was partly the Fault of her Father, who was always calling her his "ſweet *Wi-let;*" and yet, even if he had not, I think ſhe would have found it out, for all that. *My* Father called me his roſy *Cherry*, but I knew it for his Manner of Speaking. But *Violet* always believed Everything that was ſaid in her Praiſe. She was fond of me by

by Fits and Starts; and when the affectionate Fit was on, ſhe would bring her Work and ſit with me in the Arbour at the Top of our Houſe, by the Hour together. Sometimes my Father and Mother would join us there, in the long Summer Evenings, and we would ſup in the open Air; no one objecting to it but *Dolly*, who had to carry the Things up ſo many Pair of Stairs.

At other Times, when my Father and Mother were otherwiſe engaged, *Mark* would come up to us; and ſit upon the Roller or Watering-pot, and ſay ever ſo many funny Things to us both; which we thought very pleaſant. Sometimes *Violet* would let her Ball of Thread roll through the Rails and drop down into the Street, and ſend him to fetch it; and when he had brought

brought it ſhe would do the ſame Thing again; which he ſaid was too bad, but I don't think he minded it. I never played him ſuch Tricks myſelf; for, what was ſingular, though we lived in the ſame Houſe together, I was ſhyer of him than ſhe was.

Our firſt floor was let to a very learned and excellent Man, though a very ſingular one, the Reverend *Nathanael Blower*, who had been Curate of *St. Magnus* till the Form of Religion changed. Then he was hard put to it, where to lay his Head without fleeing the Country or getting into Trouble; for the Independents were mighty intolerant; and he whom we uſed to think it a great Honour to get a paſſing Word and a Smile from, was now thankful to take up his Reſt among us. Holy Writ tells us

us that ſome have entertained Angels unawares: if we entertained an Angel, it was not unawares, though he was a very eccentric and untidy one. He ſaid he would have called my Mother the good *Shunammite* if it had not been a Shame to provoke Compariſon between himſelf and the Prophet *Elijah*. Indeed his was ſomewhat like the "Chamber on the Wall," for the Back-room in which he ſlept was a Lean-to that ſtuck againſt the main Wall like a Swallow's Neſt, and hung perilouſly over the foaming River, trembling at every half-ebb Tide; but Uſe inures us to Everything, and he ſaid he ſlept as well in his Neſt as a Sailor in his Hammock. As to his Sitting-chamber, it was ſoon a perfect Pig-ſty (if Pigs ever had Books) of Papers, Parchments, Books,

Books, Pamphlets, old Shoes, Hats and Coats, Medicines, Cordials, Snuff-boxes, Pipes, Walking-ſticks, and Everything that is untidy. Aſter a Time he began to think whether he might not, by a conſcientious Conformity, be a Working-bee rather than a Drone in the Hive; and, having ſome Acquaintance with Maſter *John Howe*, the *Whitehall* Preacher, who was known to be forward in aſſiſting the Royaliſts and Epiſcopalians in Diſtreſs, if they were but Men of Merit, he went and took his Advice on the Subject before he preſented himſelf before the Triers, that is to ſay, thoſe who tried the ejected Miniſters whether they might be allowed to officiate again in Public or not. Along with him went Doctor *Fuller*, ſo well known by his wiſe and witty Books; who was generally

generally upon the merry Pin, for as pious a Man as he was. He, preſenting himself before Maſter *Howe*, ſaid,

"Sir, you may obſerve I am a "pretty corpulent Man, and I am "to go through a Paſſage that is "very ſtrait. I beg you would be "ſo kind as to give me a Shove, "and help me through!"

Maſter *Howe* ſmiled, and frankly debated the Subject with him and Maſter *Blower;* and the End of it was, that when the Triers put it to Maſter *Fuller* whether he had ever had any experience of a Work of Grace upon his Heart, he made Anſwer, that he could appeal to the Searcher of Hearts, that he made Conſcience of his very Thoughts; and Maſter *Blower* ſaid in other Words what amounted to the ſame Thing; howbeit, like *Pharaoh's* Butler

Butler and Baker, one was accepted —the other not.

And the Reaſon was, that they got upon the Queſtion of particular Faith, which was very prevalent in *Oliver Cromwell's* Court, and put it to him whether he did not believe that all who aſked for Anything in Faith would have it granted them, as well as have an Aſſurance on the Spot that it would be ſo. Which he ſaid, in that large, unqualified Senſe, he did not, for that he believed many timid Believers had the Faith of Adherence who had not the Faith of Aſſurance; and that if Prayer were made for ſome unreaſonable Thing, however fervently, he did not think it would be granted. That would not ſtand Maſter *Blower;* ſo he had to come back to his Swallow's Neſt.

"But is it not an extraordinary

"Thing,

"Thing, now," ſaith he to my Mother, "that they ſhould, except "for the Sake of catching a Man "in his Talk, ſo hardly inſiſt on "the literal Acceptance of a Dogma "which they themſelves muſt know "they overſtrain? For would one "of them dare to pray that his "Father or Mother might come to "Life again in this preſent World, "however much he might long to "ſee them in the Body? Or that "all Jews, Infidels, and Heretics, "might be converted this very "Moment, however deſirable a "Thing it might be? We do the "Word of God Diſhonour and "make it of none Effect when we "interpret by the Letter inſtead of "the Spirit."

In this Faſhion would the excellent Maſter *Blower* vouchſafe to converſe with my Mother in my Hearing,

Hearing, much to her Edification and mine. Meantime *Violet Armytage* was much more given to Flirting than Preaching; and had more Admirers than any Girl on the *Bridge;* but the Man whom ſhe and her Mother were chiefly deſirous ſhe ſhould captivate was no Admirer of hers at all. This was *Hugh Braidfoot*, the Glover, who lived next Door to us; and who talked the Matter over with my Father very freely when they had the Shop to themſelves; I ſewing in the Parlour behind.

"I can ſee quite plainly through "the old Lady," quoth he, as he ſate on his favourite Seat, the Counter, with his Feet eaſily reaching the Floor, "I can ſee "what ſhe's driving at, and don't "reſpect her for it a bit. Why "ſhould ſhe always be buying

"Gloves

"Gloves three or four Sizes too "ſmall for her broad red Hand, "and then be ſending *Violet* over "to change them again and again "till they fit? I've a dozen Pair "waſted that ſhe has ſtretched. "And where is the other Daughter, "and why is ſhe always in the "Background?"

"*Kitty* is ſickly and a little lame," ſays my Father, "and has her "Health better in the Country."

"I don't believe ſhe's either "ſickly or lame," ſays *Hugh Braidfoot*, "only the Mother wants to "get this Daughter off first—and "ſtands in her own Light by her "Manœuvres, I can tell her. "Defend me from a managing "Mother!"

About this Time, my Father's Trade had a ſhort but ſurpriſing Impetus, which, as he ſaid to my Mother,

Mother, "was but the Flaring up "of a Candle in the Socket, juſt "before it goes out." Cropped Heads and long Curls being now the Signs of different Parties, and the Round-heads having the uppermoſt, numerous Perſons that had hitherto been vain enough of their long and graceful Treſſes, which brought no ſmall Gain to the Hair-dreſſers, were now anxious to be ſhorn as cloſe as *French* Poodles, for Fear of getting into Scrapes with the reigning Power. And as, like the Sheep after Shearing, they left their Fleeces behind them, which were in many Caſes exceeding valuable, my Father and *Mark* were buſied from Morning to Night, in waſhing, baking, and weaving beautiful Sets of Hair, which were carefully reſerved for future Occaſion.

"For

"For you will ſee," quoth my Father, "there will ſooner or later "be a Re-action; *I* may not live "to ſee it, but you Youngſters will; "People will be tired of Puri- "taniſm and Rebellion ſome of "theſe Days, and then the old "State of Things will come back; "and the Croppies will be as "aſhamed of their Stubble Heads "as the Cavaliers are of their Love- "locks now; and, as Hair won't "grow as faſt as green Peas, they "will then be conſtrained to wear "Wigs, and then will come a rare "Time for the Barbers!" Every Word of which, like ſo many other of his Propheſyings and Preſages, in due Seaſon proved ſtrictly true!

Meantime, though this Fury for cropping filled the Till as long as there was any long Hair to cut off, yet, this being preſently done, a great

a great Stagnation of Buſineſs enſued; for, whereas the curled Locks had required conſtant curling, bruſhing, and trimming, the round Heads were eaſily kept ſhort, and brought only Pence where the others had brought Shillings. My Father kept his Hair long to the laſt; and, to expreſs his Opinion of the Times, ſo as e'en they who ran might read, he ſet up two waxen Effigies in his Window, not merely Heads, but half Lengths; the one repreſenting an exceeding comely and handſome young Man, (very much like my Couſin *Mark*,) with long, fair Treſſes moſt beautifully crimped, falling over his *Vandyke* Collar and black Velvet Coat: the other, with as red a Noſe as old *Noll*, cloſe cropped, ſo as to ſhow his large Ears ſticking out on each Side. And to make the Satire more

more pungent, the Roundhead made as though pointing to the Cavalier, with a ſmall Label ſuperſcribed, "See what I was!"—and the Cavalier, with a Look of ſilent Diſguſt, was ſigning at the Roundhead and ſaying, "See what I ſhall "be!"

This Comicality, which had coſt my Father and *Mark* ſundry Hours of evening Labour,—(I had made the Dreſſes,) drew Crowds of People to the Window, ſo as even to obſtruct the Paſſage along the Bridge; and excited Peals of ironical Laughter; till, at length, Mirth proceeding to Miſchief, Blows began to enſue among thoſe who favoured oppoſite Sides. Then the Bridgewardens came with Conſtables and Weapons to quell the Diſturbance, and an idle Fellow was ſet in the Cage, and another

with long Hair put in the Stocks; and one or two of our Panes of Glaſs were broken; ſo that what began in Sport ended much too ſeriouſly; and my Father, finding he muſt yield to the Times, changed the Cavalier's Placard into "See "what you had better be," and finally removed it altogether, ſaying he was nauſeated with time-ſerving. But he perſiſted in wearing his own long Hair, come what would; which drew from the Reverend Maſter *Blower* that Similitude about the *Trojan* Horſe, who, I ſuppoſe, perſiſted in wearing his Mane and long Tail after they had become Types of a Party. And when my Father was called in queſtion for it by one of the Bridgewardens, and aſked why he perſevered in troubling *Iſrael*, he with his uſual Spirit retorted upon him with, "How

"How can a Tonſor be expected "to hold with a Party that puts "Pence into his Till inſtead of Shil- "lings?" Whereupon the Bridge-warden called him a ſelf-intereſted *Demas*, and ſaid no more to him.

Hugh Braidfoot upheld him through thick and thin, laughing all the while; though he kept his own buſhy Head as ſhort as a Blacking-bruſh. Indeed, this Man, though the Eſſence of Mirth and Good-humour, ſtrongly built, and ſix Foot high, had not a Quarter of my Father's Valour.

As for Maſter *Blower*, he made a wry Face on it, ſaying that Magnaſheh Mikſheh (which I afterwards heard was Hebrew for well-ſet Hair) was now of no Account.

—One Evening,—I have good Reaſon to remember it,—the Days being ſultry and at their longeſt,—

we

we made a Pleaſure-party to *Greenwich*, and took Water below the Bridge. Coming back juſt as the Moon was riſing, a Boat-full of uproarious and half-intoxicated young Men fell foul of us and upſet us. I ſhall never forget my Senſations as I went into the Water! —The next Minute, I was half out of it again, and found *Mark*'s Arm cloſe round me, while with the other he ſtruck out, and preſently brought me Aſhore. My dear Father alſo reſcued my Mother; and *Hugh Braidfoot's* long Legs helped him more in wading out like a Heron, I think, than his Arms in ſwimming, for he, too, preſently came aland, covered with Mud. My Mother and I cried, and felt very grateful to *Mark*, who ſtood panting and colouring, and looking very much pleaſed with himſelf;

himſelf; and preſently we were all in another Boat on our Way to the Bridge Stairs, drenched, quiet, and thankful for our providential Eſcape. . . I, eſpecially, feeling, oh! how happy!—Yet, in after Days, there was a Time when I was ready to wiſh *Mark* had left me in the River—.

CHAP. III.

Reſult of the Water-Party.

—The only Perſon in the Boat, who was left for the Boatman to ſave, was Miſtreſs *Gloſſop*, the Widow of a *Cheapſide* Hairdreſſer in a much larger Way of Buſineſs than my Father, with whom we were on very intimate Terms. She was a Woman of about forty-five, tall, bulky, and with a very heated Face, which was the Reſult of Intemperance, not in drinking, but eating, as I have often heard her acknowledge. She was fond of Everything nice, and had a Habit of

of ſaying, "Oh, I can't reſiſt this!" "I never can reſiſt that!" which uſed to diſgust me with her; and make me ready to ſay, "More ſhame for you if you cannot." She and her Huſband had always been well to do; and now ſhe was Miſtreſs of a large Buſineſs, with Court-patronage, ſuch as it was, and a Foreman and three 'Prentices under her; beſides keeping a profeſſed Cook, Houſemaid, and Scullion. And whereas ſhe and Maſter *Gloſſop* had always been Companions and Goſſips of my Father and Mother, whoſe Ages were ſuitable to them, yet, now ſhe had caſt off her Weeds, ſhe went mighty fine; and *Mark*, who thought her ſufficiently unagreeable, though he often went on Errands to her, ſaid he was ſure ſhe was caſting about for a ſecond. To a Woman of her Habit, the Ducking ſhe

ſhe got was unlikely to be of much Good; and as for her flame-coloured Mantua, and pea-green Mantle, they were ruined outright: however, ſhe was very merry about it, and as we were all engaged to ſup with her, would hear of no excuſe. Howbeit, my Mother was too wet for doing Anything but going Home and to Bed: my Father would not leave her; *Hugh Braidfoot* ſaid he would join us, but did not; and the End was that *Mark* and I, when we had dreſſed ourſelves afreſh and kept our Engagement, found Nobody to meet us but ſome *Cheapſide* Shop-keepers who had not been on the Water. And though they made very merry, and though there were Lobſters, and Pound-cake, and Ducks, and green Peas, and fried Plum-pudding, and Gooſeberry Pie, and other Delicacies too numerous

to

to mention, I had no Mind to eat, but ſat ſhivering, and ſcorching, and thinking of the Water cloſing over me; and at length, before any one elſe was ready to leave, begged Miſtreſs *Gloſſop* to let me wiſh her Good-night.

Mark, though he was in high Spirits, came away with me, and very kindly ſaid he feared I was the worſe for the Accident. And though he had been very talkative at the Supper-table, yet as ſoon as we got into the open Air we became as quiet as two Judges, and walked Home ſcarcely ſpeaking a Word, till we came to that laſt one, "Good-night."

I had taken Cold, which, with a good deal of Fever attending it, made me very poorly for ſome Days; and my dear Mother, who did not ſhew it ſo much at firſt, had

had in fact taken her Death-chill, though we knew it not till long afterwards. Meantime, ſhe kept about; I ſeeming at firſt the worſt of the two, and ſitting by the Fire in a Cloke, very chilly, though 'twas cloſe upon the Dog-days. *Violet Armytage* came over the Way to ſee me; and ſaith ſhe, "Dear "*Cherry*, how well *Mark* behaved! "I ſhall think the better of him for "it as long as I live!"

I felt I ſhould do ſo too, but had no Mind to ſpeak much about it; and, my Cold being heavy, and making me indiſpoſed to talk, ſhe ſoon went away. Almoſt daily, however, ſhe came acroſs; and, when ſhe did not, *Mark* went at her Deſire to tell her how I was.

And ſo I got well; and juſt as I was fit for going out again, my dear Mother's Illneſs became ſo apparent

apparent that I kept wholly to the Houſe. At firſt we thought it troubleſome rather than dangerous, and were not frightened; and, though I ſat by her Bed almoſt all Day long, ſhe would ſometimes ſend me down to work below and keep an Eye to the Houſe. Her Illneſs ſubdued me a good deal; and *Mark* was become unwontedly gentle and ſilent; ſo that, though we ſcarce ſaw each other ſave at Meals, we ſaid little; and yet I never felt him to be better Company.

Violet ſent me Word that unuſual Preſs of Buſineſs in the Shop kept her from coming over, but begged I would never let a Day paſs without ſending her Word how my Mother was; which I did, though thinking, now and then, ſhe might have juſt run over, if but for a Minute.

One

One ſultry Evening, my Mother being ready to compoſe herſelf to Sleep, bade me ſit below till ſhe rang for me, as ſhe was ſure the Room muſt be warm and cloſe. It was ſo, in fact, and I was feeling a little faint, therefore was glad to ſit at the open Caſement of our Parlour behind the Shop. The Buſineſs of the Day was done; my Father was goſſiping with *Hugh Braidfoot* next Door; there was a pleaſing Confuſion of diſtant Sounds from the City and along the Water; Boatmen calling "Yo, heave ho," and ſinging Snatches of Boat-ſongs; the Water trembling and murmuring among the Arches, and the Evening Air feeling ſoft and reviving.

While I was thus ſitting, all alone ſave for *Dolly* in the Kitchen, and Maſter *Blower* on the firſt Story,

Story, *Mark* comes in and gives me a Poſy, ſaying, "*Violet* ſends you "theſe Flowers:" and then remained, with his Hand reſting on the Back of my Chair.

I know not how long we thus remained, quite ſilent, and I conſcious of great Pleaſure in his Preſence; till at laſt, for want of Anything more important to ſay, I obſerved, "How pleaſant the Evening "Air is coming over the Water!"

"Very," ſaid he, without ſeeming to be thinking much about it: and again we were both quiet.

"Couſin," ſaid he at length, in a very gentle Voice,—which was not his uſual Way of addreſſing me, for in common, he called me *Cherry*.—

—"Dear Couſin, I have ſome-"thing to ſay to you"—and ſtopped.

"What

"What is it, *Mark?*" ſaid I, ſoftly.

"We have lived long together," began he again, faintly laughing, "and I never felt afraid of ſpeaking "to you, before—How odd it is "that I ſhould feel ſo, now!"

"What have you to be afraid "about?" ſaid I, looking up at him: on which he coloured and looked away; and I did the ſame, without knowing why.

"You have always been my "Friend," reſumed he, taking Courage, "you will not be angry "with me?"

"Why ſhould I?" ſaid I. "Is "there Anything to be angry "about?"

"Perhaps you may think ſo," ſaid he, "when you come to know "all. Dear *Cherry*, I'm in Love!" And laughed, and then was ſilent.

I never

I never felt ſo perplexed what to ſay next. "I don't ſee that is any "Matter of mine," ſaid I at length.

"Don't you, though? But that "depends upon whom I'm in Love "with!" ſaid he, ſmiling. "If it "were with Anybody a hundred "Miles off, that you had never ſeen "or heard of, you might ſay it was "no Matter of yours; but, *Cherry*, "ſhe's not one Mile off! She's the "prettieſt Girl on the Bridge!"

"Then," ſaid I, turning ſcarlet as I ſpoke, "it muſt certainly be "*Violet Armytage!*"

"It is!" cried he rapturouſly, "What a Gueſſer you are!—Dear "*Cherry!*"

Oh! what a Bound my Heart gave; and then ſeemed to ſtop! For,—I'm only ſpeaking to myſelf; to myſelf I may own the Truth—I had not thought he meant *Violet!*

"Ah,"

"Ah," ſaid he, after a long Silence, which I was as unable as he was diſinclined to break, "I dare "ſay you've ſeen it all along—I "may have told you no News—you "are ſuch a good Secret-keeper, "*Cherry!*"

I could not yet ſay a Word—He had taken my Hand and wrung it; and I gently preſſed his in Sign of Sympathy; it was all I could do, but it was quite enough.

"How kind you are!" ſaid he. "What do you think my Uncle "will ſay?"

"What do you think her Father "will ſay?" ſaid I faintly.

"We are not going to tell him "juſt yet," returned he, "nor yet "her Mother."

"That ſounds bad, *Mark*—"

"Nay, *Cherry*, you know how "crazy the old Lady is to have

"*Braidfoot* for her Son-in-law;
"ſhe'll find in Time he won't
"come forward, and *Violet* will
"take care he ſhall not, for
"ſhe will give him no Encourage-
"ment; but, till her Mother finds
"it won't do, there's no Uſe in
"my ſpeaking, for you know
"I have nothing to marry upon,
"yet."

"When ſhall you have?" ſaid I.

"*When?*" repeated he, looking a little annoyed, "why, *ſome of theſe* "*Days*, as the Saying is. You "know I am thorough Maſter of "my Buſineſs now, have ſerved my "Time, receive good Wages, and am "very uſeful to your Father. Who "knows but that, as Time goes on, "he'll take me for a Partner, and "finally retire from Buſineſs?"

"Ah, *Mark*, ſo little comes in now, "that he will have nothing to retire

" upon. We can but juſt go on as " we do."

" Well," ſaid he laughing, with a little Embarraſſment, " perhaps " Miſtreſs *Gloſſop* will take me into " Partnerſhip. I'm a Favourite in " that Quarter."

" Miſtreſs *Gloſſop!* Oh, *Mark!*"

" Nay, *Cherry*, don't you ſee, if " old Maſter *Armytage* takes a " Fancy to me, he may make it " worth her while to do ſo, for the " Sake of his 'ſweet *Wi-let*'?"

" Ah, *Mark*, Maſter *Armytage* is " himſelf in a very ſmall Way of " Buſineſs—nothing at all to com- " pare with Miſtreſs *Gloſſop's*. *We* " love and eſteem them for old " Acquaintance ſake, but ſhe looks " quite down upon them. There " are ſo many ſmall Haberdaſhers " on the Bridge!"

" Well, the ſmaller he is, the leſs

" Reaſon

" Reaſon he will have to look down
" upon me. I ſuppoſe you don't
" mean to ſay, *Cherry*, that no
" young Man thinks of Marriage
" unleſs he is better off than I
" am?"

" So far from it, *Mark*, that I
" cannot ſee what Right the *Army-*
" *tages* have to expect a better
" Match for their Daughter; and
" therefore I think it a Pity there
" ſhould be any Concealment."

" Marry come up!" cries he, " I
" would rather draw a Double-tooth
" for a fiery Dragon than tell
" Maſter *Armytage* I was Suitor for
" his ſweet *Wi-let!*"

" Why, you will have to tell him
" ſooner or later," ſaid I.

" Not . . not if we wait till he
" dies," ſaid *Mark*.

" *Dies!* oh, *Mark!*"—

" It's ill, reckoning on dead
" Men's

"Men's Shoes, I own," ſaid he, looking rather aſhamed.

"It's unfeeling and indelicate in the higheſt Degree," ſaid I. "Why "ſhould not *Violet* tell her Father?"

"Ah, *Cherry*, ſhe will not; and "what's more, ſhe has made me "ſolemnly promiſe that *I* will not, "at preſent; ſo you ſee there's no "more to be ſaid. We muſt juſt "go on, hoping and waiting, as "many young Couples have done "before us; knowing that we love "one another—and is not that, for "a While at leaſt, enough?"

I faintly ſaid, "Yes."

"You don't ſpeak ſo heartily, though, as I thought you would," ſaid he. "Don't you ſympathize "with us, *Cherry?*"

I looked up at him with a Smile, though my Lip quivered, and ſaid fervently, "Oh, yes!"

"That's

"That's right!" ſaid he gladly. "Now I ſhall feel that whether "Things go rough or ſmooth with "me, you take cordial Part in them. "God bleſs you, *Cherry!* And if "ever I'm in any little Difficulty "with *Violet*, I ſhall come to you "for Advice and Help, rely upon "it!—Hark, there is your Mother's "Bell."

I ran off, glad to leave him; and found my Mother coughing, and in want of ſome Water. When ſhe had recovered herſelf, and compoſed herſelf again to Sleep, I ſat by her Caſement, looking out on the ſame Scene I had been gazing on an Hour before; but oh! with what different Feelings!

The Trouble of my Soul taught me how much I had cared for him, what Expectations I had nouriſhed of him, what Disappointment I felt in

in him. All was changed, all was ſhivered: never to be built up again! And yet no one knew what Hopes were wrecked within me. — The World was going on juſt the ſame!

I thought how kind my Father and Mother had been to him, and how likely it was they had hoped he would marry me, and how certainly, in that caſe, my Father would have ſhared his Buſineſs with him.

I thought how dull and forlorn a Place the World would now ſeem to me, but reſolved they ſhould never know it. I would go on, in all Reſpects, juſt the ſame.

Large Tears were flowing unreſtrained down my Cheeks, when Maſter *Blower's* Bell, having been once rung already, was now pulled again with ſome Impatience; and as *Dolly* had ſtepped out, I anſwered it

it myſelf, and found he wanted his Supper, which he took at no particular Time, but juſt whenever he was inclined to lay aſide his Reading or Writing. I might have ſpread the Table for him nineteen Times out of twenty, without his ever looking at me; however, on this Occaſion he happened to have nothing better to do, and obſerved I was in Trouble.

"Child," ſaid he, "is thy Mother worſe?"

"No, Sir, I humbly thank you."

"Then," ſays he, "Something "else has happened to grieve thee, "for thine Eyes are red with "weeping. What is it?"

But I could not tell him.

"Well," ſaid he, after a Pauſe, "young Girls may have their Griefs "that they don't care to tell about. "—Man is born to Trouble, as the "Sparks

" Sparks fly upward. And ſome-
" times thoſe Griefs we ſhow leaſt,
" we feel moſt. But remember,
" my good Girl, (for a good Girl,
" *Cherry*, thou art!) that there is
" One to whom we may always
" carry our Burthens; One who
" can eaſe them, too, either by
" giving us Strength to bear them,
" or by removing them altogether
" — Go pray, my Child, go
" pray!"

And I did as he bade me, and found Balm for a bleeding Heart. He was a good and wiſe Man, was Maſter *Blower*.

When my Mother awoke, ſhe said, " *Cherry*, I don't know what
" has come over me, but I feel a
" Peace and a Quiet paſt expreſſing
" . . I ſhould not wonder if you
" have been praying for me, my
" Child."

I preſſed

I preſſed her Hand and ſaid, "Yes, Mother, I have . . . and for "myſelf too."

"This Illneſs of mine may be "a Bleſſing in Diſguiſe to us "both," ſaid ſhe after a Pauſe— "it has taught me your Value, "*Cherry*."

"What a funny Story," reſumed ſhe preſently, quietly ſmiling, "might be written by a clever "Hand about a Perſon who always "fancied herſelf undervalued! '*The "Undervalued Woman!*'—There are "a good many ſuch in the World, "I fancy; poor Things, it ſeems "no Joke to *them*. People who "have that Impreſſion of themſelves "generally take ſuch ſilly Methods "to prevent their being over- "looked! They had better make "themſelves of real Importance, "by being uſeful and thoughtful "for

" for others. They had better take
" Pattern by *you, Cherry!*"

How dear, a Mother's Praiſe! Eſpecially when ſo ſeldom beſtowed!

CHAP. IV.

Chelſea Buns.

VIOLET ſeemed afraid (and yet why ſhould ſhe be?) to come near me, after *Mark's* Communication; and, as my dear Mother could ill ſpare me, I kept cloſe Houſe. We now felt the Bleſſing of having a diſcreet and godly Miniſter for our Inmate; for Maſter *Blower* read and prayed much with my Mother, and comforted her greatly by his Diſcourſings. I likewiſe derived Benefit from the good Seed he ſcattered, which fell, as it were, into Ground much ſoftened by heavy Rain.

When

When I was able and inclined to ſtep acroſs to *Violet*, I found only Maſter *Armytage* in the Shop; who ſaid to me with ſome ſhortneſs, "You will find my Daughters "within,—I wiſh your Father "would find Something more "profitable for your Couſin to do "than to be always in our Parlour, "a hindering of Buſineſs."

I knew *Mark* was not there juſt then, at any Rate, having left him at Home; and, ſtepping into Maſter *Armytage's* Back-room, I only found there a pale, gentle-looking Girl, with large, brown Eyes, diligently putting Shop-marks to a Box of new Ribbons. I knew her for *Kitty*, though her return Home was News to me; and, having not much to ſay to a Stranger, I aſked her how ſhe liked the *Bridge*. She ſaid, "Not at all; I have been uſed

"to

" to look upon Trees and Fields,
" and I miſs the Green; the Noiſes
" make my Head ache, and my
" Mother keeps me ſo cloſe to my
" Work, that I pine for freſh Air."

I ſaid, " Sure there is enough of
" it blowing through that open
" Window from the River!"

" Do you call it freſh?" ſaid ſhe, rather contemptuouſly, " I do not,
" I can tell you! Inſtead of being
" ſcented with Cows' Breath and
" new-mown Hay, it comes from
" Tan-yards and Butchers' Shops."

When *Violet* came in, ſhe bluſhed very red, but we only ſpoke of indifferent Subjects: and, ſtrange as it was of two ſuch cloſe Intimates, we never, from that Time forward, had any cloſer Communication. Perhaps it was her Fault, perhaps it was mine: or perhaps, no Fault of either, but a juſt and becoming

Senſe

Senſe of what was beſt for two modeſt Girls in our new Relation. For, though it needed not to be ſuppoſed that ſhe knew Anything of what was paſſing in my Mind, I am perſuaded that ſhe did.

And thus the Families fell apart; and *Mark* never renewed his Confidences to me after that firſt Evening; and, if he had Moments of keen Pleaſure now and then, I am perſuaded he had Hours of Pain he had never known before. For *Violet* was capricious and coquettiſh, and ſometimes would vex him by being unreaſonable and hard to pleaſe: at other Times, by laying herſelf out to pleaſe others, as Maſter *Braidfoot*, and their Lodger Maſter *Clarke*. And though ſhe gave out to *Mark* that this was only for a Feint, to draw off the Attention of her Father and Mother from himſelf,

himſelf, yet ſometimes it was certainly with no other Purpoſe than to plague him, and at other Times, I fear, with no better Purpoſe than to pleaſe herſelf; and I know it coſt him many a Tear.

Poor *Mark!* how my Heart ached for him, and ſwelled againſt her, when I found him one Evening with his Arms on the Table, and his Head on his Arms, and ſaw, when he looked up, that he had been crying. He roſe, and looked out of Window, and ſaid, "Has it "done raining yet? I think I have "been aſleep!" But I knew he had not.

All his Money now went in fine Clothes for himſelf, and Preſents for her; ſo that if he needed a little Purſe againſt his Marriage Day, he was not going the Way to fill it.

There

There was great Talk among the young People, about this Time, of an Excurſion up the River, to eat Buns and drink Whey at *Chelſea*. I was invited to join them, but declined, on account of my Mother: but *Mark* was to go, and could think of Nothing elſe. I waſhed and ſtarched his Collar and Bands myſelf, and ſewed a new Lace on his Hat. He wore a plain ſilver-grey Cloth Suit, which was ſober, but very becoming, for he never affected ſtrong Contraſts, like my Father. Knowing he was fond of a Flower in his Button-hole, but was preſſed for Time to get one, I gave a little Girl a Penny to run down to the Market for the beſt Moſs-roſe ſhe could buy, and gave it him myſelf. He thanked me moſt pleaſantly for it, and looked ſo comely and cheerful, that when he went

went forth, I could not help ſtanding juſt behind the Window-blind, to look after him, and to ſee the gay Party ſet out from Maſter *Armytage's*. Firſt, a Boy was ſent forward, with a great Baſket full of Veal-pies and other Dainties; then came out Maſter *Armytage*, with Miſtreſs *Gloſſop*, who had condeſcended to join the Party, and wore a peach-bloſſom Silk, with pea-green Ribbons. Then, Miſtreſs *Armytage*, with a little Baſket covered up, no Doubt containing Something very precious; and *Hugh Braidfoot* by himſelf, with his Hands in his Pockets, as if he expected to be aſked to carry it, and did not mean to offer, walking a little in Advance of her; then *Violet*, looking ſweet! between *Mark* and Maſter *Clarke*— (I know ſhe liked having two better than one, whatever might be her

Value for either,) and then *Kitty*, who by Rights ſhould have had one or other of them, ſlowly following with Maſter and Miſtreſs *Benſkin*. I obſerved her to be a very little lame, but Nothing to ſpeak of.

Well! the Day was fine, the Water looked lovely, there was Nothing to prevent their having a moſt charming Party of Pleaſure, unleſs it were their own Fault. I thought of them many Times, as I ſat quietly weaving Hair at my Mother's Bedſide; and fancied them floating on the River, landing under tall Trees, rambling among Meadows, ſitting on the Graſs, eating and drinking in the Shade, and ſcattering in ſmall Parties. I fancied what I ſhould do and feel if I were *Violet*, and how *Mark* would comport himſelf, and what he would ſay: but, when I looked on my Mother's

Mother's pain-worn Face, I did not wiſh to change Places.

They did not come Home till very late; much too late. I had perſuaded my Father to go to Bed, and let me ſit up for *Mark*, for Fear of diſturbing my Mother. He ſaid *Dolly* might as well ſit up too; however, ſhe proved heavy to ſleep, ſo I ſent her to Bed.

Then I ſat at my Window, which was over Maſter *Blower's* Sitting-room, and looked out on the *Bridge*. The Harveſt-moon, brightly ſhining, made our Side of the Way as light as Day, but Maſter *Armytage's* Side was in deep Shade. I heard *St. Magnus's* Clock, and *St. Paul's*, and *St. Mary Overy's*, ſtrike Eleven. Then I ſaw ſome dark Figures coming along in the Shade, and ſtop at Maſter *Armytage's* Door, and knock up the Maid, who, after long

long Delay, came ſleepily to the Door with a Candle. Then the others, who had been talking, but not much, like People who were very tired after too long a Day's Pleaſure, ſaid "Good-night;" and I ſaw *Hugh Braidfoot* ſhake Hands with the Girl on his Arm, and ſtep acroſs to his own Door in the broad Moonſhine. Maſter and Miſtreſs *Benſkin* had gone Home before, and let themſelves in with the Houſe-key. I counted thoſe that entered Maſter *Armytage's*, and only made out his own Family. *Mark* had doubtleſs ſeen Miſtreſs *Gloſſop* to her own Door, as was right and fitting. For him, then, I muſt expect to wait a good While longer: and I *did* wait a good While; till all the Clocks ſtruck Twelve. Juſt as they had done ſtriking, I heard and knew his Step, and opened the Door without

without his knocking. "Have you "had a pleaſant Day?" ſaid I.

I looked at him as I ſpoke, and ſhall never forget his Face!

—"Good Night," ſaid he ſhortly, "we'll talk it over to-morrow."

And impatiently took from my Hands his Candle, which I was trying to light for him at mine. But it had been ſnuffed too ſhort, and would not light as readily as he wiſhed; which made him curſe it in a low, deep Voice. I had never heard him ſwear before.

"*Mark*," ſaid I, looking anxiouſly at him, "you are ill."

"No, I'm not," ſaid he abruptly, "good Night. Thank you for "ſitting up for me."

"I'm not at all tired," ſaid I, "and there's ſome Supper for you "in the Kitchen. Let us go there, "and have a little Chat over the

"Pleaſures

" Pleaſures of the Day—you don't " look ſleepy."

From white he turned to deep red.

" The Day has not been ſo " pleaſant as you ſuppoſe," ſaid he huſkily; " you have been better and " happier at your Mother's Bedſide. " I wiſh there were more ſuch as " you in the World. Good Night, " dear, good *Cherry!*"

—And ſprang Up-ſtairs without another Word, taking two Steps at a Time. I went to Bed, but not to ſleep; I could not get his ſtrange Look and Manner out of my Head.

The next Morning, at Breakfaſt-time, *Mark* did not appear. *Dolly* ſaid he had gone out early. My Father was angry, and ſent acroſs the Way for him, knowing he was but too often at Maſter *Armytage's*. But *Dolly* brought back Word they had

had ſeen Nothing of him. Then we concluded he had gone for an early Walk, as was often his Cuſtom, and had outſtayed his Time. However, we breakfaſted without him at length, and ſtill he did not come back.

"Confound that Boy," ſaid my patient Father at laſt—(thus, the Fault of one Party provoked the Sin of another,)—"it's plaguy tire-"ſome of him to be playing Truant "this Morning, of all Days in the "Year, for I have preſſing Buſineſs "in *Eaſtcheap*."

"Leave me in Charge of the "Shop, *Father*," ſaid I,—"my "Mother's Cough is quiet, now ſhe "is dozing; and I ſhall hear her "Bell."

"Well, I ſuppoſe I muſt," ſaid he very reluctantly; "but I ſhall "trounce Maſter *Mark* well for "his

" his Conduct when I ſee him next,
" he may rely upon it!"

So he left me in Charge; and my loved Mother being in a Kind of lethargic Slumber, which often laſted many Hours, I left the Doors open between us, and ſat in the Shop. As Fate would have it, not a ſingle Cuſtomer looked in the whole Time my Father was away; which was lucky, though we did not feel very thankful, in uſual, for this Falling-off in Buſineſs. Before he returned, *Mark* came in, and beckoned me into the Parlour.

" What is the Matter?" ſaid I, with a violently beating Heart.

" I've done it!" ſaid he breathleſſly.

" Done what?" ſaid I.

" Married!" ſaid he: and hid his Face in his Hands.

" Dear *Mark*, how imprudent!"

I exclaimed

I exclaimed affectionately, "what "*will* the *Armytages* ſay?"

"What will they, *indeed!*" repeated he, "*Violet* eſpecially! She "drove me to it!"

"*Violet?* *Drove* you to marry "her?" I cried.— It ſounded ſo ſtrange!

"Oh, *Cherry!* what *will* you "ſay? It makes me ſhudder to tell "you!" he rapidly ſaid; "Nothing "but that Girl's incorrigible Coquetry "could have made me break with "her as I did; and then Reproaches "led to Taunts, and Taunts to "Threatenings, till bad led to "worſe, and ſhe twitted me with "my Poverty, and I told her I "could be a richer Man in twenty-"four Hours than her Father, and "look down upon them all; and "ſhe dared me to it, and ſaid a "better Man than me was waiting "for

" for her, and ſo—Temptation to " be revenged on her came in my " Way, and—I've married Miſtreſs " *Gloſſop!*"

" Oh, *Mark!*"

—" Nay, *Cherry*, don't give way " ſo," ſaid he, beginning to ſhed Tears himſelf when he ſaw me weeping bitterly,—" Love is not a " Man's whole Life, and what I've " taſted of it has n't made me very " happy—I've ſtepped into a famous " Buſineſs, and I ſhall have a quiet " Fire-ſide, and a capital Table, and " kind Looks if not pretty ones, and " —a done Thing can't be undone: " ſo there's an End on't!"

Then, fancying he heard my Father's Step, though 'twas only Maſter *Blower's*, he haſtily exclaimed, " You muſt tell my Uncle " —Good-bye, *Cherry!*" and hurried out of the Houſe.

When

When he was gone, I ſat in a Kind of Stupor . . *Married?* and to ſuch a Wife!—How *could* he?—how could *ſhe?* . . and this increaſed my Amazement, for he had been beſide himſelf with Anger and Jealouſy, and hardly knew what he was doing,—but that ſhe, cool, collected, and at her Time of Life, could have cloſed with his Propoſals without the Delay of a ſingle Day! —how diſguſting!—Ah, ſhe was afraid of loſing him!

—Immerſed in theſe ſad Thoughts, with my Hands claſped on my Lap, I was unaware of my Father's Return till he ſtood before me. I ſtarted.

"Has *Mark* returned?" cried he.

"He came back, and is again "gone," ſaid I.

"The young Raſcal!" exclaimed my Father very paſſionately, "what "does

" does he mean by this outrageous " Conduct? I've a great Mind to " lock the Door againſt him when " he comes back!"

" *Father*, he will never come " back!—He is married! . . married " to Miſtreſs *Gloſſop*."

And, trying to ſpeak compoſedly, all would not do; the Tears rained from my Eyes.

My Father remained perfectly mute. I could underſtand his Amazement, his Vexation, by my own; accompanied, as I knew it muſt be in his Caſe, by great Anger. I expected every Moment to hear ſome violent Expreſſion of Indignation: he had been ſo unuſually diſpleaſed with him already for what was comparatively a Trifle.

All at once, I found myſelf folded in his Arms. He did not ſay a Word;

Word; but the longer he held me, the more and more I felt that his Hopes for me had been ruined as well as mine, that his Schemes and Viſions of the Future were all diſperſed and overclouded, that he knew Something of what was paſſing within me, and felt Sympathy without having the Power of expreſſing it.

"Well,—" ſaid he, releaſing me at laſt,—and I ſaw that his Eyes were wet, "Man propoſes, but GOD "diſpoſes. We've had an Eſcape "from this young Man. Un- "grateful young Fellow! And "blind to his own Intereſt, too, "for I could have done better for "him, *Cherry*, than he knows of. "But—he deſerves his Fate. A "miſerable one it will be! He'll "never proſper!"

"Oh, *Father!* don't propheſy "againſt

"againſt him! We need not wiſh "him ill."

"I don't wiſh him ill," returned he, "but he'll come to no Good. "He has done for himſelf in this "Marriage. And ſo, *Cherry*, you'll "ſee!"

CHAP. V.

A Shadow on the Houſe.

Oh! how dreary now ſeemed the Houſe! Its Light and its Life were gone. The unſeen Preſence of Love no longer gladdened it, and the Shadow of Death was ſlowly creeping on.

Violet came to pour out her Wretchedneſs and her Self-reproaches to me as ſoon as ſhe heard what had happened. She declared ſhe could never be happy again—ſhe could never ceaſe thinking of him. I told her it would be very wicked of her now, to think of him in

in the Way ſhe meant, any more. For ſaying which, I ſuppoſe ſhe was offended at me; for ſhe did not come near me again for a good While.

I don't ſuppoſe Tears are often ſhed over thick Slices of Bride-cake, with Sugar and Almonds an Inch deep, ſuch as *Violet* and I received (tied up with ſuch vulgar white Satin Knots!) from Miſtreſs *Gloſſop*, now, alas! Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop*. When I took it up to my Mother, ſhe turned away her Head, and ſaid with her gentle Smile, "You may give my Share to *Dolly*, "—perhaps ſhe will like it to dream "upon."

I ſaid, "I don't believe *Dolly* "will touch it;" however, there I was miſtaken. She ſaid, "Law, "Miſtreſs *Cherry*, I'm ſure Miſtreſs "is very good. . . I grudge the "eating

" eating of it, too; for 'tis an un-
" ſeemly Match, I calls it; but,
" there,—one don't get ſuch Cake
" as this every Day!"

When I repeated this Saying to my Mother, ſhe ſaid, " She belongs " to the *Gloſſop* School, *Cherry*, that " *never can forbear.*"

Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop* would have been glad, I fancy, to ſhew off her young Huſband on the *Bridge;* but ſhe received no Encouragement; and as for *Mark*, who had certainly intended to pique *Violet*, he was now as wretched as herſelf, to judge from his Looks, as reported to us by one or two who had ſeen Something of what was going on. Happy or unhappy, he never came near us, on Buſineſs or Pleaſure; and as my Father dropped the Connexion, which was more to his Loſs than Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop's*, we now ſaw

Nothing of one another. For I ſcarce went out at all; but now and then Miſtreſs *Benſkin* would let fall how ſhe had met the *Blenkinſops* going to ſuch and ſuch a Place of Public Reſort; he looking aſhamed and tired of his Companion; and ſhe as fine as the Rainbow. For ſhe would not only ſee *Funamble Turk*, and pay her Shilling to ride round *Hyde Park*, but intrude herſelf among the Quality in *Mulberry Garden*, I warrant her!

About this Time Maſter *Armytage* died. Thereby his Family ſuſtained great Loſs, not only of a kind Huſband and Father, but of worldly Goods; for the Widow only got a Third of the Worth of the Buſineſs, and the Son, who was married and not very friendly with her, chooſing to live on the Premiſes and carry on the Concern, ſhe and her Daughters

Daughters preſently went into an exceeding ſmall Houſe in the *Borough*, where they opened a little Shop that did not anſwer very well. After a While, *Violet*, unuſed to ſuch ſcant Living, was glad to come back as Shopwoman to her Brother, whoſe Wife had no Turn for Buſineſs; but it went ſore againſt her to be Second in the Houſe where she had hitherto been always treated like Firſt; and alſo it was a Grievance to her to live among a Family of young Children. Theſe Trials fretted her till they impaired her Beauty, making her grow peeviſh and thin.

Meantime, her younger Siſter took Plain-work when ſhe could get it; and the *Benſkins* and *Hugh Braidfoot* ſupplied her with what they could, which ſhe accepted gratefully; though, in her Father's Life-time,

Life-time, it would have quite affronted Miſtreſs *Armytage* that her Girls ſhould ſet a Stitch for either of them. But Times were altered now; ſhe was unable even to keep a Servant; and, one Day, when I looked in upon her, I noticed ſo many little Symptoms of Poverty, that, on repeating them to my Mother, ſhe made me put up a Variety of little Preſents for her, and take them to her with her old Neighbour's Love.

When I reached her Houſe, I found her on her Knees, ſcouring the Door-ſtep with ſuch Zeal and Noiſe, that I could not at firſt make her hear my Voice, or become ſenſible of my Preſence. When ſhe did, ſhe did not appear particularly glad to ſee me, but pulled her Pail out of my Way, and ſaid, "Oh!—You'll find "*Kitty* within—*Kitty! Kitty!*"

And

And juſt within the Door, ſure enough, was *Kitty* ſtanding with her Back to me, before Maſter *Braidfoot*, who was ſeated, with a fringed Glove in his Hand, and holding forth to her very earneſtly. He had ſent her a Box of Gloves to fringe, and I ſuppoſe ſhe had not trimmed them to his Mind, for ſhe was hanging her Head, and looking very uncomfortable. As ſoon as he ſaw me, he brought his Diſcourſe to a Finiſh by ſaying, "Of which, "more anon;" and nodding a Good-bye to me, ſtepped over Miſtreſs *Armytage's* Pail, and walked off. Miſtreſs *Armytage* now came in, taking off her Apron in a great Buſtle; and ſeemingly much more glad to ſee me than ſhe had been juſt before. And ſhe received my Mother's Preſents in Mighty good Part, eſpecially the Brandy-cherries, which

which had been put in quite as an After-thought, ſaying they would make a pretty little Diſh for Supper. I thought ſhe and *Kitty* had been more in the Way of Bread-and-Cheeſe Suppers now, but made no Comment. Some People would as ſoon die as not try to be thought genteel.

When I had nearly reached Home, I ſaw *Mark* coming along the Bridge, in a heſitating, reluctant Sort of Way. When he ſaw me, he ſtepped out more briſkly, and came up, holding out his Hand.

"*Cherry*," ſaid he, lowering his Voice, "my old Lady and I had "almoſt a Tiff this Morning, "becauſe ſhe wanted you and my "Uncle to come and eat ſome of "the firſt green Peas of the Seaſon "with us, and I told her I did not "think you would. But, will you?"

"Thank you kindly," ſaid I, "but "my

" my Mother is ſo ill, we have no " Heart to go anywhere now."

" I knew it was ſo," ſaid he, looking relieved, " but you will not " think me unfeeling, I hope, for " putting the Queſtion ?"

" Oh no, I think it very kind of " you," ſaid I, " I take it as I know " it was meant. Won't you come " in ? We have ſeen nothing of " you for a long Time.

" Thank you, not juſt now," ſaid he, " good-bye." And walked off as if he were in a great Hurry.

When I returned to my dear Mother, ſhe ſaid, " *Cherry*, I'm ſure " you will be amuſed when I tell " you what I have been dreaming " about,—I dreamed you were " married !"

I ſaid, " Dear Mother, if you " take to dreaming, and my " Father to preſaging, there'll " be

" be Nothing left to be ſurpriſed " about!"

" Ah, well," ſaid ſhe, gently ſmiling, " but this was a very " pretty, pleaſant Dream—You were " married to a Perſon a good Deal " older than yourſelf, but very much " to your own Mind, notwith- " ſtanding, and were living like a " Lady, with Every-thing genteel " and comfortable about you."

I ſmiled to cover a Sigh; and kiſſing her thin Hand, ſaid, " May " you live, dear Mother, to ſee " it."

" No," ſaid ſhe, " I know I ſhall " not do that—my Time is growing " very ſhort now; but yet I ſhall " leave you in Peace, *Cherry*,—I " am ſo certain of your doing well. " I don't mean becauſe of this fooliſh " Dream."

" As for doing well," ſaid I, " God's

"God's Bleſſing generally reſts on "the Child of many Prayers, . . "but if by doing well, you mean "marrying well, do you think that "is the only Way I can be "happy?"

"No," ſaid ſhe after a Pauſe, "I do not. I think there is no "other Happineſs equal to it, where "the Parties are well aſſorted, and "are good to the Core; but much "depends upon each other, and "much upon themſelves; ſo much, "that it had often been better for "them they had never met."

"And as ſo few *are* good to the "Core," ſaid I, "perhaps the "Balance of Happineſs may not lie "on the Side you think."

"Perhaps not," ſaid ſhe, "but "every one hopes to be the Excep- "tion.—However," ſhe added, after another Pauſe, "theſe Things are "not

" not of our ordering; and what-
" ever be the happier Lot, it is
" certain we cannot ſecure it unleſs
" it be appointed us, whether for
" ourſelves or for thoſe we dearly
" love. It may be GOD's Will that
" you ſhall be *Cherry Curling* all
" your Days, in Spite of my Dream,
" and in Spite of your being fitted
" for Happineſs in another State;
" but that it is his Purpoſe to make
" you happy *in yourſelf*, whatever
" you are, I feel as ſure of as that
" I ſee you now."

When I told her what Satiſfaction the Brandy-cherries had given, ſhe ſmiled quietly, and ſaid, " The ſame Woman, ſtill!—You " ſhall take her ſome potted Salmon " to-morrow."

I did ſo; but did not, this Time, find the Widow cleaning her Door-ſtep. She had gone to Market; the

the Shop was empty, and I walked through it into the little Parlour beyond. Here I again came upon *Kitty* and *Hugh Braidfoot:* ſhe was ſitting this Time, and he ſtanding, and, the Moment ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſnatched away her Hand from him, which he was holding, and ran up Stairs. I felt very awkward, and was retreating without a Word; but he, turning about upon me with a Sort of homely, manly Dignity, a Mixture of Placid and Reſolute in his Manner that I never ſaw before, and which became him very well, held out his Hand to me, and ſaid, "You ſee, *Cherry*, how it is to be. "There'll ſoon be a Wedding in "this Houſe. The old Lady has "meant there ſhould be, all along; "but what though? Shall a Man "that knows his own Mind be "ſtayed from it for Fear of playing "into

" into a managing Woman's Hands? " Had the Widow been leſs eager, " the Thing might have been ſooner " brought about; however, you and " I have known her longer than " Yeſterday—ſhe's *Kitty's* Mother; " and enough's ſaid!"

I wiſhed him Joy, and ſaid I thought he and *Kitty* would be very happy together. Then, ſetting down my Mother's little Gift on the Table, I turned to go away. " What's that?" ſaid he. " Only a " little potted Salmon for Miſtreſs " *Armytage*," ſaid I. " I'll call " *Kitty* down," ſaid he; and going to the Stair-foot, he called " *Kitty!* " *Kitty!*" but ſhe did not anſwer; and giving me a knowing Smile, he ſaid, " I don't think ſhe'll come " down while we are both here"— " I'm going," ſaid I, " but here " comes Miſtreſs *Armytage* from " Market."

" Market." " Oh, then, I'm going " too!" cried he, laughing and catching up his Hat, " I've no Mind " to break the News to the Widow, " ſo come your Ways, *Cherry*, we'll " walk to the *Bridge* together; don't " look behind you." . . " 'Tis Pity " o' my Life," continued he ſmiling, when we had walked a little Way together, " that reſpect her I cannot; " for you ſee, *Cherry*, a Man can " never reſpect a Woman whom he " ſees trying to draw him in! He " may walk into her Trap with his " Eyes open, and let her ſave him " ſome Trouble, but reſpect her or " truſt her, is out of his Power. " Firſt, ſhe wanted to have me for " *Violet:* that would not do—then, " *Kitty* was kept out of Sight till " ſhe found I would not have the " other; but as ſoon as ſhe found " I liked the youngeſt Siſter beſt, " poor

" poor *Violet* was put in the Shade, " and *Kitty's* Turn came. 'Tis ill " to ſpeak this Way of one's Mother- " in-Law elect; I hope ſhe'll breed " no Trouble between us when " ſhe's Mother-in-Law in earneſt; I " ſhould like to penſion the old " Gentlewoman off, but that can't " well be; ſo we muſt let her have " the Run of the Houſe, and try to " make her comfortable as long as " ſhe lets us be ſo."

Then, turning to a more agreeable Subject, he ſang *Kitty's* Praiſes; and, reaching his own Door, hoped ſhe and I ſhould be good Neighbours. " Your Father and you " muſt come to the Wedding- " Dinner," ſaid he, " we may not " have as many good Things as the " *Blenkinſops* had, but I fancy 'twill " be a cheerfuller Dinner."

When I told my Mother the News,

News, ſhe took it very compoſedly, but I obſerved her Eyelids give one little, involuntary Movement, that betrayed more Surpriſe than ſhe was willing to ſhew. "Ah, "my dear Mother," thought I, "another of your little Caſtles in "the Air for me has been thrown "down, I fear. This was, no "Doubt, the Hero of the Dream, "who was to make me ſo comfort- "able! What a lucky Thing that "I care not a Ruſh for him!" However, we never ſaid a Word to one another on the Subject.

So the Wedding took place, and my Father and I were at the Dinner, which conſiſted of every Nicety that Money could procure; for Miſtreſs *Armytage* ſaid that *Hugh Braidfoot* ſhould have all his favourite Diſhes, and ſhe took Care to have her own, whether they correſponded or not.

So

So there was roaſt Pig, and pickled Salmon, Calf's Head and green Gooſe, Lobſter Salad and Marrow-bones, and more Sweets than I ever ſaw out of a Paſtry-cook's Shop. As ſome Things were in Seaſon and others were not, the latter, though ſweet in the Mouth, were bitter in Digeſtion; I mean, to Maſter *Braidfoot* when he came to pay the Bills. And then Miſtreſs *Armytage*, aſhamed of having exceeded becoming Limits, went about to ſeveral of the Tradeſmen, who were *Hugh Braidfoot's* perſonal Friends, and who already were diſpleaſed enough at not having been invited to the Feaſt; and ſhe incenſed them the more by trying to get them to lower their Bills, which they thought and called exceſſive mean. Thereby, Miſtreſs *Armytage* got into bad Odour, and *Kitty* came in for

for her Share, and ſhed her firſt Tears after Marriage upon it, which I wiſh had been her laſt. However, Maſter *Braidfoot* laughed the Matter off, in a jovial, careleſs Sort of a Way; and went round himſelf and paid every one in full, and made Friends with them with a few merry Sayings; ſo Peace was reſtored, that Time.

CHAP. VI.

Metanoia.

When I ſee what a little Way the Solemnization of Matrimony in the Common Prayer Book lies from the Burial-ſervice for the Dead, (only ſeparated by the Order for the Viſitation of the Sick,) it makes me think how ſometimes in actual Life Marriages and Funerals ſeem to tread upon the Heels of one another. Scarce were the Bills for Maſter *Braidfoot's* Wedding-dinner paid, when my dear Mother, who had been faſt but gently ſinking, departed this Life without a Sigh. I had

had left her much as uſual the Night before; but in the Morning was aware of a grey Shadow over her Face, unlike Anything I had yet ſeen, and impoſſible to deſcribe, that made me ſenſible of the Preſence of Death. My Father ſupported her in his Arms, Maſter *Blower* prayed aloud beſide her, I bathed her Face with Vinegar, and *Dolly* ran for the Doctor, but juſt as he croſſed our Threſhold, ſhe gently breathed her laſt.

How empty the Houſe ſeemed! For, though a Perſon may take no active Part in its Buſineſs, yet a Senſe of their *Nearneſs* is accompanied by a conſtant Feeling of Companionſhip, ſuch as I think we might feel with regard to our HEAVENLY FATHER if we would look into the Fact of His being conſtantly about us a little more narrowly.

narrowly. Excellent Maſter *Blower* was a Tower of Strength to us under this Bereavement; knowing how to comfort a Man better than I could, and poſſeſſed of more Calmneſs and Compoſedneſs than I could be expected to have, though he ſaid his Heart bled for us all the while. But he ſet before us the Bleſſedneſs of my Mother in her glorified State ſo ſtrongly, that it was impoſſible not to feel that our Loſs was her Gain.

While the Houſe was yet darkened, I heard a huſhed Voice that had become ſtrange to my Ears of late, ſaying to my Father in the next Room, "I am ſure, Uncle, if "you would look upon it as a Mark "of Reſpect." . . and my Father, in Tears, made Anſwer to him, "I "ſhould, *Mark*, I ſhould! I ſhall "be glad for you to accompany us "to

"to the Grave; for, indeed, my "Boy, ſhe was very kindly affec- "tioned towards you."

And then cried again; and, I think, *Mark* cried too. It was Balm to my Heart to think he was going to the Funeral. An ill-adviſed Deed had in the firſt Inſtance baniſhed him from us, and, in Time, he had not only become reconciled to his Baniſhment, but, from what I made out of the Report of others, had learnt to rejoice in it. The firſt Signal of a better Frame was his *returning* to us, which coſt him an Effort, and then *repaid itſelf*. Maſter *Blower* called it *Metanoia*, whatever that meant.

Violet was very kind to me. All her old Affection for me now returned; and ſhe would bring her Work and ſit with me for Hours. Alſo the *Benſkins* and *Braidfoots* were

were kind in their Way, though after a homely Faſhion. But one that better underſtood comforting was nearer at Hand. One Evening, I heard Maſter *Blower*, as he met my Father on the Stairs, ſay, "Why, old Friend, we have lived "many a Year under the ſame Roof, "and have never broken Bread "together yet! Bring *Cherry* with "you, and ſup with me to-night!"

My diſconſolate Father, being taken by Surpriſe, had no Power to refuſe the Honour; *Dolly* was ſent for a Crab, and we ſpent a very peaceful and pleaſant Evening together, not ended without Prayer. As we left, the kind Man ſaid, "Well, Friend, ſince you won't "aſk me, I'll aſk myſelf to ſup to-"morrow Night with *you*." And ſo he did; and many a rich and learned Man might have envied us the

the diſcreet and pleaſant Gueſt that honoured our poor Table. From that Time, we thus ſpent two Evenings together every Week.

By this Time my Friend *Kitty* had taken upon her all the Importance of a well-to-do Tradeſman's Wife, which fitted her as well as one of her Huſband's beſt Pair of Gloves. Inſtead of Stuff and Dimity, flowered Chintz and even Silk was now the Wear! looped well up, too, to ſhew the graſs-green quilted Petticoat and clocked Stockings. Nothing, Maſter *Braidfoot* thought, was too good for her. And inſtead of its being "good Huſband," "honoured Maſter *Braidfoot*," ſo baſhfully ſpoken, as at firſt, now it was, "dear *Hugh*," "ſweet *Hugh*," or "*Hugh*" by itſelf alone. And happy, without Cloud, would the Lives of this worthy Couple have been

been but for the Hinderances of Miſtreſs *Armytage*. Now it was her Parſimony in Something her Son-in-Law could well afford and deſired to have; now her Expenſiveneſs in Something for which ſhe dared not give him the Bill; and then he would find it out, and rate her, half in Sport, and then ſhe would take Offence in right Earneſt. Then *Kitty* would cry, and then her Mother would ſay ſhe knew ſhe was only in the Way, and would go off for a While to her old Quarters. When ſhe got there, her Tongue lay not ſtill, like a good Houſe-dog in its Kennel, but muſt needs yap, yap, like a little Terrier, that flies at every Comer; and, to every Neighbour along the *Borough* it was, "Oh, you know not what a "*Turk* . . !"—"My poor, poor "Daughter!"—"Temper of an "Angel!"

"Angel!"—"Will wear her out at "laſt!"—"Never know a Man "before he's married!"—"Peace "and Poverty for my Money" . . . and ſuch-like.

Meanwhile, *Hugh* and *Kitty* were as merry as Crickets in their own Chimney-corner, little gueſſing or caring what an ill Report of their Fireſide was ſpreading all along *Southwark:* and if *Hugh* met e'er a Neighbour's Wife that gave him a dark Look, as much as to ſay, "Ah! for all your blythe Face, I "know what I know!"—all he did was to cry, "Neighbour, how do "you do?" in a jovial Voice that rang along the Street. Thus the Huſband and Wife would go on, mighty comfortable by themſelves, till ſome favourite Diſh, perhaps, of Miſtreſs *Armytage's* would be ſet on Table, and *Kitty*, with a Tear in

in her Eye, would ſay, "Poor, dear "Mother is ſo fond of a roaſt "Pig." "Set it down before the "Fire again, then," ſays *Hugh*, "while I run and fetch the old "Gentlewoman. . I'll be back in "five Minutes."—And, in about a Quarter of an Hour, ſure enough, he would return with the Widow on his Arm, and there would be a little kiſſing and crying, and then all would ſit down in high Good-humour with one another, and Things would go on quietly till *Hugh* and his Mother-in-Law quarrelled again.

About this Time, dear, good Maſter *Blower*, who had hitherto led a removed Life among us, hidden and yet known, miniſtering and being miniſtered unto by many of his old Flock on the Sly, did by ſome Indiſcretion or Miſadventure provoke

provoke the Notice of the Powers then riding paramount, and, coming Home to us in great Perturbation one Day, told us he muſt at once take Ship to *Holland* in a Veſſel going down the River the next Morning. This was greatly to the Sorrow of my Father and myſelf; and ſome Tears of mine fell on his little Packet of clean Linen as I made it up for him; and I thought it no Wrong to ſlip into the eaſy Slippers I knew he would not fail to take out at the Journey's End, a little Purſe with ſeven Gold *Caroluſes* in it, that I had long been hoarding for ſome good Uſe. The Wind was light, but yet fair: there was a Remedy againſt Sea-ſickneſs in my Father's Shop-window that I had not much Faith in, it had lain ſo long in the Sun, even ſuppoſing there ever were any Virtue in it; however,

however, I thought there could be no Harm in juſt ſewing it in the Lining of his Coat, according to the Directions printed . . at leaſt, ſo I thought at the Time, but afterwards I obſerved I had made a Miſtake, but it did no Harm, if no Good. And Father gave him a Bottle of *Cognac* Brandy, which really *had* ſome Virtue in it, ſo we did for him what we could, one Way or another. And he packed up what few Papers he could carry, and burned others, and locked up the reſt, leaving them and his Books in my Charge, with his Bleſſing. And ſo the good Man went.

Often afterwards, when I was ſetting his Rooms in Order, and duſting his Books, I would ſtand with my Duſter in my Hand, looking at the Table at which he uſed to write, and the old Arm-chair

chair in which he uſed to ſit, and fall into a kind of Muſe, till I almoſt ſeemed to ſee his large, quiet, brown Eyes, that were ſet ſo far under the Shadow of his Brows, and ſeemed lighted up, ſomehow, from within, looking up at me, and his pleaſant Face ſmiling at me, (he had a very ſweet Smile, had Maſter *Blower*,) and his pleaſant Voice ſaying, "Well, *Cherry*, is it Eating-"time again, already?"

Now and then I would open one or other of his Books, and, if I chanced upon Anything I underſtood and that intereſted me, would ſtand reading on and on, till I was ſtartled by hearing my Father call for me. At length, he knew where to look for me; and took to laughing at me for taking ſuch a Turn for Study; but one Day he fell to reading one of Maſter *Blower's* Books himſelf,

himſelf, and liked it ſo well, that, we being but quiet Companions for one another, now there was ſo little to ſay, we ſpent many an Hour, ſitting over-againſt each other, each with our Book.

One Day, as I ſat ſewing in the Parlour, and my Father was cutting a Man's Hair, I heard his Cuſtomer ſay, "My *Lord Protector*'s very ill, "and like to die."

"Don't believe it," ſaid my Father, "*he'll* never die in his Bed." Which, for once, was a Preſage that did not come true.

"Well, he ſeems to think ſo "too," ſaid the other; "at all "Events he's having Thanks put "up for his Recovery, while yet "he's as bad as can be; which "looks premature."

"That's the Faith of *Aſſurance*, "I call it," ſaid my Father dryly.

"Well,

"Well, now, what may be the "Matter with his Grace?—a Pain "in his Heart, or his Head, or "what?"

"A tertian Fever, they ſay," returned his Companion; "you know "his favourite Daughter died ſcarce "a Month back, and, in her laſt "Moments, ſhe told him many a "Thing that no one had had "Courage to tell him before, and "expoſtulated with him on his "Ways, and charged him with "ſlaying the LORD's Anointed; "which, 'tis thought, he took ſo "much to Heart as that his troubled "Mind invited if it did not occaſion "this Illneſs."

"Well," ſaid my Father, "I'd "rather be the dead King than the "dying Protector. What has be-"come now of all his Truſt in the "LORD, and inward Aſſurance?

"Does

"Does the Grandeur he has earned "with ſo much Guilt, ſmooth his "ſick Pillow? Is the Death he ſo "boldly confronted on the Battle- "field quite ſo eaſy to face, now he "lies quiet and watchful all Night, "with his Silk Curtains drawn "about him? Does he feel as "ſecure of being one of the Elect, "unable to fall into final Reproba- "tion, as when he was fighting his "Way up to a dead Man's Chair? "Ah, Sir, we may aſk one another "theſe Queſtions, but our own "Hearts muſt give their only "Anſwer."

In Fact, *Oliver Cromwell* preſently breathed his laſt, amidſt a Tempeſt of Wind and Rain, that ſeemed a Type of his own tempeſtuous Character. And in his Place was ſet up one that did not fill it: his quiet and peaceable Son, *Richard*, who

who had gone on his Knees to his Father to pray that the *King's* Head might not be cut off. He was gentle, generous, and humane; but thoſe were no Recommendations in the Eyes of the Army or Parliament, ſo he was preſently ſet aſide. Whereon enſued ſuch Squabblings and Heart-burnings, I was glad I was not a Man.

One Day, *Mark* came in, all fluſhed and eager, looking like his old ſelf; and "Uncle!" ſays he, "there's a brave Time coming again "for Hairdreſſers! It's my Fancy, "Wigs will preſently be in, (for "Cavalier Curls won't grow in a "Night!) and then you'll have a "Market for that Lot of Hair that "you and I put ſo carefully aſide."

"How ſo, *Mark?*" ſays my Father.

"Why," ſays *Mark*, "*honeſt George* "*Monk*, as the Soldiers call him, is "marching

" marching up to *London*, and you " have always ſaid he was a Royaliſt " in his Heart."

" Heaven defend us from Siege " and civil War," ſays Father, " we've had too much of them " already. Better one Maſter than " many, even ſuch a Maſter as old " *Noll;* and if General *Monk* is " coming up to ſeat himſelf in his " Place, 'twill be better for us than " theſe City Tumults, wherein a " Parcel of young 'Prentices that " deſerve a good Threſhing, get " together and clamour for Things " they know not, till grown Men " are forced to put them down with " a ſtrong Hand. *Where there's* " *Order, there's Liberty;* and No- " where elſe."

Mark's News proved true; the diſaffected Regiments were ſent out of *London*, and General *Monk* with his

his Army entered *Weſtminſter*. He was a right-judging as well as right-meaning Man on the whole, to my Mind, prudent and moderate, though he ſided firſt with one Party, then with the other, then back to the firſt again. One of the evil Conſequences of our evil Times was, ſo many conſcientious Men were ſet down for obſtinate and pig-headed, or elſe Turncoats. My Father, to repreſent the Humour of the Time, had removed the obnoxious Cavalier and Puritan from his Window, and ſet up in their ſtead a Head that united half of both, which, revolving ſlowly when he pulled a String, ſhewed now one Side, now the other, and, as he obſerved, never looked ſo bad as when you ſaw a little of both. But as ſoon as *Monk*, throwing off his late Shew of Moderation, marched into the City, removed

removed the Poſts and Chains acroſs the Streets, ſeized on obnoxious Perſons, and broke down our Gates and Portculliſes, my Father became ſure that a great Change was at Hand, and the *King* would enjoy his own again. Whereon, he commenced beautifying and renewing the waxen Cavalier, which had got a little fly-ſpitten, and privately ſmuggled into the Houſe a moſt beautiful female Counterpart for it, extremely like *Queen Henrietta Maria*, whom I immediately ſet about dreſſing in the favourite Style of her Majeſty, that is to ſay, in a rich velvet Boddice, with a falling Collar of Cut-work, Vandyked at the Edge, relieved by a blue Breaſt-knot. My Father dreſſed her Hair in long, drooping, dark Curls, with a few pearl Pins; and, abiding the right Time with Calmneſs and Confidence,

Confidence, ſhut up the comely Pair in a dark Cloſet till the happy Moment for their burſting upon the World ſhould arrive.

CHAP. VII.

Signs in the Air.

And now the glorious Reſtoration at length arrived, and 'tis incredible what a Spur it was to Trade, and how the Mercers and Drapers could hardly ſupply their Cuſtomers faſt enough with expenſive Goods; and how the Tailors and Sempſtreſſes worked all Night, and Hairdreſſers ſold their Ell-wigs, and Hatters their Hats, and Horſe-dealers their Horſes good and bad. For every one was for pouring out of *London*, acroſs our Bridge, at leaſt as far as *Blackheath*. Oh! what a buſy, what a joyous

joyous Sight it was! All the Streets from the *Bridge* to *Whitehall* were hung with Tapeſtry, and the Windows filled with Ladies. The *Lord Mayor's* Cooks ſet up a gay Tent in *St. George's* Fields, to prepare a Refection for his Majeſty. The Livery Companies in their various rich Dreſſes of Crimſon, Violet, Purple, and Scarlet, lined the Streets on one Side, and the Trained Bands on the other: Burſts of gay Muſic were intermingled with Cheers and Laughter; Everybody ſeemed in tip-top Spirits that the *King* was coming. We let our Windows for a good Premium to ſome of the Grandees; but had a good View ourſelves of what was going on, from the Leads—now there would come along a Troop of two or three Hundred or more, in Cloth of Silver Doublets; then four or

or five Times as many in Velvet Coats, with Attendants in Purple; then another Party in Buff Coats with Cloth of Silver Sleeves and green Scarfs, others in pale Blue and Silver, others in Scarlet: by and by, ſix Hundred of the Livery on Horſeback, in black Velvet with Gold Chains, then the Trumpeters, Waits, City Officers, Sheriffs, and *Lord Mayor* . . in ſhort, there was no End to the Splendour and Glory of that Day; for we had hardly reſted ourſelves after ſeeing them all go forth, when they began to come back, with the *King* in the midſt. Oh! what Shouts! what Cheers! what Burſts of Muſic! And he, bowing this Side and that, ſo ſmiling and gracious! "It "ſeemed," he ſaid, "as if it muſt "have been his own Fault he "came not ſooner back, Every-"one

"one appeared ſo glad to ſee "him!"

But the Ladies' Dreſſes!—Oh, how grieved I was!—Sure, they were reſolved to make up for the Dulneſs and Decorum they had been reſtricted to during the Protectorate; for indeed, they ſeemed to think Decorum and Dulneſs went together, and ſhould now be thrown overboard in Company. The *Henrietta Maria* Dreſs I had ſo complacently made up for our Wax Doll, was now twenty Years behind the Faſhion! fit only to laugh at!—and what had taken its Place, I thought fit only to bluſh at.

For a Moment, when the Party that had hired our firſt-floor Window had thrown off their Clokes, I felt a dreadful Preſentiment that their Characters could not

not be over-good; or elſe, thought I, they never could dreſs in ſuch a Manner. Only, knowing who they were, I thought again, *that* can never be—dear Heart! what can they be thinking of? we ſhall have Stones and Mud thrown up at the Window. "Sure, Madam," ſaid I to the youngeſt and prettieſt, "you will catch Cold at the open "Window . . the Wind blows in "very freſh from the River—will "you juſt have this Scarf a little "over your Shoulders?" "No, "thank you," ſays ſhe, ſhaking back quite a Buſh of fair Hair, and looking up at me with her Eyes half ſhut, as if ſhe were ſleepy already. "Forſooth," thought I, "thoſe Curls are equal to a Fur "Tippet"—And, looking acroſs at our Neighbours' Windows, I ſaw we need not fear pelting, for that all

all the other Ladies were dreſſed juſt the ſame. Then thought I, Oh, this is the *Reſtoration*, is it? If you, fair Ladies, provoke ill Thoughts of you, you muſt not feel aggrieved if People think not of you very well.

I diſliked this Symptom of the Reſtoration from the very firſt—not that it had, naturally, any Connexion with it.—The *King* had lived long abroad, had become fond of foreign Faſhions; but were the modeſt Ladies of *England*, therefore, to give in to them? Then, what the upper Claſſes affect, the lower Claſſes ſoon ape: I knew we ſhould preſently have Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop* and *Violet* trying which could wear the longeſt Curls and ſhorteſt Petticoats, and look the moſt languiſhing. The only Difference would be, that the one would become the Faſhion, and

and the other make it ridiculous. Perhaps, thought I, I am growing prudiſh and old-maidiſh, I am Eight and Twenty; but ſo is *Violet*.

I have often thought, that if the Ladies of *England* had at this Time been what they ought, a good Deal of Folly and Sin that preſently ſtained this Reign would never have happened. What! could the merry Glance and free Word of a light young Monarch break down Barriers that were not tottering already? What had Mothers and Teachers been about? Where were the Lady *Fanſhawes* and *Lucy Hutchinſons?* There muſt have been Something wrong in the Bringing-up—I can never believe all theſe fair young Ladies were ſo good one Day and ſo bad the next.

But the joyfulleſt Event, to our-

ſelves,

ſelves, on that glorious Twenty-ninth of *May*, was the Reſtoration to his Country and Home of our excellent Friend and Lodger, Maſter *Blower*. He ſeemed to be rejuvenized by the general Spirit of Hilariouſneſs; for I proteſt it ſeemed as though ten Years were taken off his Shoulders. And he talked of being ſoon replaced in his Curacy; but, inſtead of that, his Friends preſently got him a Living in the City, which took him away from us, as there was a Parſonage Houſe. But we went to his Church on *Sundays;* and, as he was not one of thoſe who forget old Friends or humble ones, he would make my Father and me ſup with him about once a Quarter, and come to us of his own Accord about as often, and talk over the Times, which in ſome Reſpects, as far as Sabbath-keeping

and

and general Morality went, we could not ſay were bettered.

And now a ſhocking Sight was to be ſeen at the *Bridge* Gate,—the Heads, namely, of thoſe Traitors who brought about the Death of the late King, and who richly deſerved their bad End. There they have remained for many a Year, a Terror to all Evil-doers.

It was in the Spring following the Reſtoration, in the Month of *March*, that we and the *Braidfoots* were taking our Supper together on the Leads, the Weather being very warm for the Seaſon, when our Attention was attracted by the uncommon Appearance of the Clouds, which, as will often be the Caſe after much Rain, were exceeding gorgeous and groteſque. Maſter *Braidfoot* was the firſt of us who noticed them, and cried, "See, ſee, "Neighbours!

"Neighbours! Cannot you now "credit how Lovers of the Marvel- "lous have oft-times ſet Tales afloat "of Armies ſeen fighting in the "Air? Do not thoſe two Battalions "of Clouds, impelled by oppoſite "Currents, look like two great "Armies with Spears and Banners, "about to encounter each other? "Now they meet, now they fall "together, now one vaniſhes away! "Now, they both are gone!"

"And ſee, dear *Hugh*," cries *Kitty*, "there's another that looks "like a Cathedral; and another "like an exceeding big Mountain, "with a Rent in its Side; and out "of the Rent comes Something "that looks like a Crocodile, with "its Jaws wide open; no! now it "is liker to a Bull, or rather to a "Lion."

"Very like a Whale!" ſaid a Man,

Man, as if to himſelf, on the Top of the next Houſe. It was Maſter *Benſkin's* Lodger, who wrote for the Bookſellers.

Kitty ſtarted, and lowered her Voice; for we were not on ſpeaking Terms with him; however, ſhe ſqueezed my Arm and ſaid ſoftly, "It really *is* becoming Something "like a Whale now, though!" On which, Maſter *Braidfoot* burſt into one of his ringing Laughs, and cried, "Why, *Kitty*, you give it as many "Faces as the Moon! What will "you fancy it next?"

"I wonder what it means," ſays ſhe, very gravely.

"Means?" ſaid her Huſband, ſtill laughing, "why, it means we ſhall "have ſome more wet Weather. So "we'll put off our Pleaſure Party. "See what a red Flame the ſetting "Sun caſts all along the City!"

About

About a Week after this, our Neighbour, Master *Benskin*, gave my Father a little Pamphlet of four Leaves, writ by his Lodger; the Title of which was truly tremendous. It was this,—

"Strange News from the West! being a true "and perfect Account of several Miracu- "lous Sights seen in the Air westward, "on Thursday last, by divers Persons of "Credit, standing on London Bridge be- "tween Seven and Eight of the Clock. "Two great Armies marching forth of two "Clouds, and encountering each other; but, "after a sharp Dispute, they suddenly "vanished. Also, some remarkable Sights "that were seen to issue forth of a Cloud "that seemed like a Mountain, in the "Shapes of a Bull, a Bear, a Lyon, and "an Elephant with a Castle on his Back; "and the Manner how they all van- "ished."

"Well," said my Father, turning the Leaf, "is it dedicated to "Mistress *Braidfoot?* Here seems

" to be much Ado about Nothing,
" I think."

" Nothing or Something," ſaid Maſter *Benſkin* laughing, and jingling his Pockets, " it has enabled " my Lodger to pay up ſeven " Weeks' Arrears; ſo it's an ill " Wind that blows Nobody any " Good. The Trifle has had a " Run, Sir!"

" So this is the Way Books are " made, and Stories are vamped " up," ſaid my Father. " Truly, it " makes one ſerious."

But a little Time after, a Rumour was repeated in the Shop that did indeed make one ſerious, to wit, that the Plague was in *Holland*, and would very likely come acroſs to us. However, though the following Year it did indeed rage very badly in *Amſterdam* and *Rotterdam*, yet it croſſed not the Water for

for another twelve Months or more; and as we had no ſuch Things as printed Newſpapers in thoſe Days, ſuch as I have lived to ſee ſince, Reports did not inſtantly ſpread over the whole Nation as they do now.

Howbeit, at the latter End of *November*, 1664, there really were two Caſes of Plague in *Long Acre*, which frightened People a good deal. A third Man afterwards died of the ſame Diſtemper in the ſame Houſe, which kept alive our Uneaſineſs; but after that, nothing was heard of it for ſix Weeks or more, when it broke out beyond Concealment.

At this Time, Maſter *Benſkin's* Shop-window was full of ſmall Books with awakening Titles, ſuch as "*Britain's* Remembrancer,"—"Come out of her, my People,"—"Give

"Give Ear, ye careleſs Daughters," and ſuch-like, many of them emanating from the Pen of his Lodger in the Attick; and with theſe and *Lilly's* Almanacks, he drove a thriving Trade.

Violet was ſitting with me one Morning, when *Mark* ſuddenly entered, and ſeeing her with me, loſt his Preſence of Mind directly, and forgot what he had to ſay. She on her Part, being juſt then in Mourning for one of her Brother's Children, for whom I am bold to ſay ſhe had ſcarce ſhed a Tear, (he being a humourſome Child, particularly diſagreeable to her,) fetches a deep Sigh, and with a pretty, penſive Air takes up her Work, riſes, mutely curtſies to him, and retires. On which he, after a Minute's Silence, ſays ſadly, "*Violet* "is as beautiful, I ſee, as ever,"—

and

and I was grieved to find he ſtill thought ſo much about her.

Juſt then, my Father enters; and *Mark* of a ſudden recollecting his Buſineſs, exclaimed, "Oh, *Uncle*, "here is a capital Opening for you. "'Tis an ill Wind, ſure enough, "that blows nobody any Good,—I "don't know why you ſhould not "do a good Turn of Buſineſs as "well as ourſelves by being Agent "for the Sale of theſe patent "Noſtrums" . . . and thereon pulled out a Parcel of Bills, headed "Infallible Preventive-pills againſt "the Plague." . . "Never-failing "Preſervatives againſt Infection." . . "Sovereign Cordials againſt the "Corruption of the Air." . . "The "Royal Antidote—" and ſo forth.

—"No, Boy, no," ſaid my Father, putting them by, one after another, as he looked over them, "Time "was

" was when I ſhould have thought " it as innocent to laugh in my " Sleeve at other People's Credulity " and turn a Penny by their Delu- " ſions as yourſelf, and many others " that are counted honeſt Men; but " I'm older and ſadder now. To " the beſt of my Belief, every and " all of theſe Remedies are Counter- " feits, that will not only rob People " of their Money, but peradventure " of their Lives by inducing them " to truſt in what they have bought " inſtead of going to the Expenſe " of proper Medicines. A ſolemn " Time is coming; my own Time " may be ſhort; and whether I be " taken or whether I be left, GOD " forbid I ſhould carry a Lie in my " right Hand, or ſet it in my Shop- " window."

A Cuſtomer here ſummoned him away; and *Mark*, inſtead of de-

parting,

parting, ſat down beſide me and ſaid, "What think you, *Cherry*, of "this approaching Viſitation? Are "you very much affrighted?"

"Awe-ſtricken, rather," I made Anſwer, "I only fear for myſelf "along with the reſt, and I fear "moſt for my Father, who will be "more expoſed to it than I ſhall; "but I feel I can leave the Matter "in GOD's Hand."

"I wiſh I could," ſaid poor *Mark*, ſighing. "I own to you, *Cherry*, "I am horribly diſmayed. I have "a Preſentiment that I ſhall not "eſcape. My *Wife*," continued he, with great Bitterneſs in his Tone . . he commonly ſpoke of her with aſſumed Reckleſſneſs as "his old "Lady" . . . "my Wife has no "Senſe of the Danger—mocks at "it, defies it; refuſes to leave her "Houſe and her Buſineſs, come "what

" what may, and tells me with a " Scoff I ſhall frighten myſelf to " Death, and that *Ralph Denzel* " ſhall be her Third.—Don't you " hate, *Cherry*, to hear Huſbands " and Wives, even in Sport, making " light of each other's Deaths?"

Her Groſſneſs was offenſive to me, and I ſaid in a low Voice, " I do."

" And if I die, as die I very " likely ſhall," purſued he, hurriedly, " you may do me a Kind- " neſs, *Cherry*, by telling *Violet* that " I never—"

This was inſupportable to me. " Dear *Mark*," I cried, " why yield " to this Notion of Evil which may " be its own Fulfilment? God " watches over all. With proper " Precaution, and with his Bleſſing, " we may eſcape. No one knows " his Hour: the brittle Cup oft " laſts

" laſts the longeſt.—Many a Caſu-
" alty may cut us off before the
" Day of general Viſitation."

" Aye," he replied, with a ſick-
ened Look, " but I had a Dream
" laſt Night . . . and, juſt now, as
" I came through *Biſhopgate* Church-
" yard, a Crowd of People were
" watching a Ghoſt among the
" Tombs, that was ſigning to Houſes
" that ſhould be ſtricken, and to yet
" undug Graves."

" *Watching* it?" ſaid I. " Did
" you ſee it?"

" Well, I rather think I did,"
ſaid *Mark*, " but am not quite
" aſſured—the Preſs was very great.
" At any rate, I ſaw thoſe who
" evidently *did* ſee it. My Wife
" has had her Fortune told, and the
" Fortune-teller avouched to her
" ſhe ſhould eſcape; ſo there's the
" Ground of *her* Comfort. To
" make

" make doubly ſure, ſhe wears a " Charm. For me, I am neither " for Charm nor Fortune-telling,— " if I die, I die, and what then! " I've often felt Life ſcarce worth " keeping; only one don't know " what comes after!"

And, with a faint Laugh, he roſe to go away. I ſaid, " *Mark!* " *Mark!*"

" What is it?" he ſaid, and ſtopped. I ſaid, " Don't go away " with that light Saying in your " Mouth—"

He ſaid, " Oh!" and ſmiling, opened the Door. I ſaid, looking full at him, " Faith in GOD is the " beſt Amulet."

" It is," he ſaid more gravely; and went out.

Preſently my Father came in to Supper; and ſat down, while it was making ready, near the Window, looking

looking out on the River quite calmly. Our large white Cat ſat purring beſide him. Stroking her kindly, he ſaid, "Puſſy, you muſt "keep cloſe, or your Days will be "few . . . they've given Orders, "now, to kill all the Dogs and "Cats. I believe, *Cherry*, we are "as ſafe here as we ſhould be in "the privateſt Retreat in the King-"dom, for Infection never harbours "on the *Bridge*, the Current of "Air always blows it away, one "Way or the other. But, my dear, "we may be called away at any "Hour, and I never ſleep worſe of "a Night for bearing in Mind I "may not ſee another Morning. "But I reſt all the peacefuller, "*Cherry*, for knowing you will "never be in Want, though this "poor Buſineſs ſhould dwindle away "to nothing. Maſter *Benſkin* and

"*Hugh*

" *Hugh Braidfoot* know all about " my little Hoard, and will manage " it well for you, my Daughter. " And now, let's ſee what is under " this bright little Cover. Pettitoes, " as ſure as *London Bridge* is built " on Wool-packs!"

And he ate his frugal Meal cheerfully, I thinking in my Mind, as I had ſo often done before, that the firmeſt Heart is oft found in the littleſt Body.

CHAP. VIII.

The Plague.

As Spring advanced, the Plague came on amain. Houſes were ſhut up, ſome empty, ſome with infected People in them under Guard, ne'er to be let out, ſave in perfect Health or to be caſt into the Dead-cart. Swarms of People hurried out of Town, ſome in Health, ſome already infected: never was ſuch a Blockade of Carts, Coaches, and Horſemen on the *Bridge;* and I was told, on the northern and weſtern Roads 'twas ſtill worſe. Every Horſe, good and bad, was in Requeſt, at enormous

enormous Hire: as ſoon as they had done Duty for one Party, they came back for another, ſo that the poor Things had an ill Time o't. The Court ſet the Example of running away; the Nobility and Gentry followed it; the Soldiers were all ſent to Country Quarters, the *Tower* was left under the Guard of a few Beef-eaters, all the Courts of Law were cloſed, and even the middle and lower Ranks that could not well afford to leave their Shops and Houſes, thought it a good Matter to eſcape for bare Life, and live about the Country in removed Places, camping in the Fields, and under Hedges.

Thus the City, which had previouſly been ſo over-filled as to provoke the comparing of it with *Jeruſalem* before the laſt Paſſover, was in a Manner ſo depopulated, that

that though vaſt Numbers remained in its By-ſtreets and Lanes, whole Rows of Houſes ſtood empty. Thoſe that walked abroad kept the Middle of the Streets for Fear of Infection; Graſs began to grow between the Paving-ſtones; the Sound of Wheels was ſcarce heard, for People were afraid of uſing the Hackney-coaches; Beggars, and Street-ſingers, and Hawkers, had altogether diſappeared; ſo that there was nothing to break the awful Stillneſs ſave the Shrieks of dying Perſons in lone Houſes, or the Rumbling of the Dead-cart.

Meanwhile, though the Diſtemper was raging on both Sides of us and all about us, it came not on the Bridge. Crowded Aſſemblages of Buyers and Sellers at Markets, &c., being much to be avoided, we laid in as much Stock as our ſmall

Premiſes

Premiſes would hold and our ſmall Family require, of Soap, Candles, Groceries, Cheeſe, Bacon, ſalt Butter, and ſuch-like. And whereas the Plague raged worſe than anywhere among the Butcher's Stalls and low Fiſhmongers, we made a Merit of Neceſſity, and faſted from both Fiſh and freſh Meat, as well for our Health as our Sins, which, if ſundry others had done in a proper Frame and Temper, 'tis likely they might have been ſpared.

Thus we kept cloſe and went abroad little, except to Public Prayers; reading and meditating much at Home, and conſidering as *Noah* and his Family probably did in the Ark, that if our Confinement were irkſome, 'twas a cheap Price to pay for Safety. Of the *Blenkinſops* we ſaw nothing after the regular Outburſt of the Calamity; but

but we knew that Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop* was not only reſolved not to ſtir, but that ſhe would not ſo much as lay in Stores for daily Conſumption; perverſely and cruelly perſiſting in ſending her Servants into the Danger ſhe feared not for herſelf, to purchaſe Pennyworths of Things ſhe might have bought wholeſale.

Meantime, though our *Bridge*, by reaſon of its being one of the great Thoroughfares of *London*, could not well be ſhut up, yet the Bridge-wardens took all the Care of us they could, keeping the Gates with much Jealouſy, and burning large Fires of reſinous and ſtrong-ſmelling Subſtances. Early in the Seaſon, there was one Perſon who took a mighty Panic at her own Danger, which was Miſtreſs *Armytage*. She had left her Lodgings, oſtenſibly to be with *Kitty* during her Confine-

ment, but in Reality, as the Event proved, to be out of the Reach of Infection. However, the News of each Day, which ſhe greedily gathered, becoming diſmaller, and the Crowds of People pouring out of Town exciting her Deſire to be among them, ſhe wearied *Hugh Braidfoot* with Entreaties that he would promiſe to go into the Country as ſoon as *Kitty* got about again; and, one Night, a Coffin leaping into her Lap out of the Fire, her Fears for herſelf could no longer be allayed, but ſhe declared ſhe muſt go the next Morning, come what would. I heard much ſobbing and loud talking through the Wall overnight; and the next Morning at Day-break, ſaw the Widow departing with a ſmall Bundle in her Hand, and a young Lad carrying her heavy Box. How-

ever,

ever, the End, which was impreſſive, was this. She over-heated herſelf in her ſelfiſh Flight, ſlept in a damp Bed the next Night, and took a Hurt which ended her Life before the Year was out, though not by the Plague.

Soon after, *Kitty* gave Birth to twin Daughters, the ſweeteſt little Dears that ever were ſeen, whom ſhe very prettily inſiſted on naming *Violet* and *Cherry*. But now, the Plague being more and more talked of, and ſhe being unable to nurſe both, it became a momentous Queſtion with her whether to bring one up by Hand or ſend it to a Foſter-nurſe in the Country. At length, the latter was decided upon; and little *Violet* was put out to nurſe at *Lewiſham*.

And now the Judgment of God fell very heavy on us; inſomuch that

that amid the general Viſitation and Bereavement, it would have been ſtrange indeed if even the unafflicted could have been ſo unfeeling as to hold back from the general Mourning. The Cry from every Pulpit and every Altar was, "Spare, "O Lord, ſpare thy People, "whom thou haſt redeemed with "thy precious Blood;" and the Churches were open all Day long and crowded with Penitents, till it was found that Contagion was thereby augmented; whereon all but the bold fell to exchanging public for private Devotion.

About this Time, poor *Kitty Braidfoot* fell into much Danger. She was nurſing her little *Cherry* one Morning, and ſaying to me how her Heart yearned for a Sight of its Twin-ſiſter, when, as if in Anſwer to her Wiſh, in comes the Foſter-

Foſter-nurſe, looking defiant and heated, with the Infant in her Arms, whom without more Ado ſhe ſets upon the Table, and then retreats to the Door.

"There's your Babby, Miſtreſs," ſays ſhe bluntly, "and you owes "me one and twenty Shillings for "the laſt ſix Weeks' nurſing, at "Three and Sixpence a Week . . . "it's taken the Plague, and I can't "have my own Babby infected, ſo "I declines the farther Charge of "it—'tis a puny little Thing, and "I doeſn't think would anyhow ha' "lived long."

"Puny!" cries *Kitty*, with Eyes darting Fire, "why, you've ſtarved "it for the Sake of your own Baby! "'Twas as fine a Child as this, and "now a downright Skeleton!"

The Woman had an Anſwer on her Lips, but Something in *Kitty's* Eye

Eye and in her own Heart ſuddenly abaſhed her; and with a "Marry "come up!" ſhe haſtily turned about and quitted the Houſe, without ſo much as aſking again for her one and twenty Shillings. Poor *Kitty* exclaimed, "Oh, you little "Starveling!" and burſting into Tears, put *Cherry* into my Arms, and began to unfaſten her own Dreſs. I ſaid, "Remember, you cannot "nurſe both—." She ſaid, "I "muſt commit the other to you to "bring up by Hand and keep out "of the Infection—I cannot let this "little Thing periſh," and ſhowered on it Kiſſes and Tears, quite thoughtleſs of her own Safety.

Juſt then, *Hugh* came in, and ſtood amazed when he ſaw *Kitty* fondling the famiſhed little Infant. She, thoughtful of him alſo before herſelf, cried, "Don't come near me, "*Hugh!*

" *Hugh!* Baby has the Plague. I'm " thankful the Woman brought it " Home; God forbid a Child of " mine ſhould endanger a Child of " hers!" And preſſed her little one yet cloſer to her, and kiſſed its little, meagre Hands. Poor *Hugh* ſtood aghaſt at the News, regarding her from where he firſt ſtood with a Mixture of Wonder, Admiration, and Fear; at length exclaiming, " God be your Bleſſing, *Kitty!*"— he bruſhed off a Tear and turned away. Again ſaw I that the ſtrongeſt Heart is not always in the biggeſt Body. As for *Kitty*, I thought ſhe had never looked ſo beautiful as that Moment. She was now eagerly ſeeking for ſome Token of the Diſeaſe about her Child, but could find none. " What " and if 'twere a falſe Alarm?" cries ſhe,—" Heaven grant it!—But " now,

" now, dear *Cherry*, take your little
" Charge out of Harm's Reach—and
" bid *Nell* tend dear *Hugh* all ſhe can
" —I've Everything I want here,
" and they can ſet down my Meals
" at the Door without coming in."

I looked back at her as I cloſed the Door, and ſaw her ſmiling ſo over her Baby that it really ſeemed as if ſhe felt ſhe had in it Everything ſhe wanted. And when I lay down by my little *Cherry* at Night, and felt its little Mites of Hands ſtraying over my Face, I felt drawn towards it with a Love I had never experienced for a Child before, and wondered not how *Kitty*, who might call it Part and Parcel of herſelf, could ſo cheerfully riſk her own Life for that of her Child.

Next Morning, both our Heads were thruſt ſimultaneouſly out of our Bedroom Windows. " *Violet* is

" doing

" doing purely," cries ſhe, " there's " no Plague-ſpot—How is *Cherry?*" We exchanged Congratulations and heartfelt Bleſſings.

In ſhort, it proved a falſe Alarm; but as *Cherry* was ſo miraculouſly contented under my Care, her Mother would not have her back till every Fear of Danger was over, by which Time the pretty Creature was well weaned. If *Hugh* had loved his Wife before this, he now abſolutely adored her: he ſaid he had learned the Value of his Treaſures too dearly to run any farther Riſk of loſing them, come what might to his Buſineſs. So he ſhut up Shop, left an old Woman in Charge, bought a Tent, Horſe, and Cart, and Everything elſe he wanted or could take; and, one fair Morning, he mounted *Kitty*, all ſmiling under the Tilt, with a Darling on each

each Arm, and Bags, Baſkets, and Crockery-ware all about her; and ſhouldering his Carter's Whip, ſtarted off with his Family for *Kent*, like a blythe, honeſt Patriarch.

CHAP. IX.

Foreſhadows.

Ah! with that little Gipſey-party went all the Smiles I was to ſee for many a Day, though I knew it not.

My Father about this Time ſeemed dull and ſorry of Cheer. I aſked him if aught ailed him in Body or Mind, or had gone wrong in his Affairs. He ſaid, no—that he was ſenſible of a Heavineſs on his Spirits, but could no Ways account for it. And, with that Stoutneſs of Heart which had become a ſecond Nature, he buſtled about and tried to

to caſt it off. Still I watched him narrowly, but could detect no Signs of Diſorder. I lay awake at Night, thinking of him; and amid the Stillneſs all about, could faintly hear the diſtant Wail of that poor diſtracted Madman, who inceſſantly ran about the Streets of the City, crying, "Oh! the great and dreadful "GOD!"

After Breakfaſt, my Father ſaid to me, "*Cherry*, I ſhall be abſent "for an Hour or two, but you may "expect me punctually at Dinner."

I ſaid, "Oh, Father! why muſt "you go forth? is there any preſſing "Occaſion?"

"Why, yes, there is," ſaid he, "for a Man who owes me Money "is going to make the Plague a "Pretext for leaving the Country, "and has ſucceeded, I underſtand, "in getting a clean Bill of Health."

I ſaid,

I ſaid, "Let it be, if it be no "great Matter."

"Nay," he ſaid gently, "it *is* a "great Matter to People in our "Condition, with whom Trade is "at a Stand-ſtill. I have not yet "held aloof from any neceſſary "Affairs, but I give you my Word "I will run no needleſs Riſks."

And ſo was going forth, when I ſaid, "There is a little white on "your Shoulder," and bruſhed it off with my Apron. When I had done it, he turned about and kiſſed me.

We were to have Bacon and Eggs that day. I had a Preſentiment he would be after his Time, in ſpite of what he had ſaid, and told *Dolly* not to fry them till he came in. Hour after Hour paſſed, long after Dinner-time, and ſtill he came not. Then I grew troubled, and kept looking along the *Bridge*.

At

At laſt, when it was growing duſk, I put on my Hood and went to the Bridge Gate. I ſaid to the Gate-keeper, "Did you ſee my "Father paſs the Gate this Morn-"ing, Maſter *Princeps?*"

"Yes, Miſtreſs *Cherry*, I did," returned he, "more by Token he "ſaid he was going either through "or to *Lime Street*, I forget "which."

I ſaid, "I can't think why he "don't come back."

"Oh!" ſays he, "he'll be back "preſently," which, though ſpoken entirely at Random, yet being uttered in a cheerful Tone, ſomewhat heartened me, and I returned Home.

Maſter *Benſkin* was putting up his Shop Shutters. I ſaid, "I can't "think what has become of my "Father, Maſter *Benſkin*." He ſaid, "Has not he come Home?

"Oh,

"Oh, Something unforeſeen muſt "have delayed him. You know "that might happen to any of us." And put the Screw in his laſt Shutter.

I ſaid, "What ſhould you do if "you were me?" He ſaid, "Well, "I'm ſure I can't tell what I ſhould "do—I don't ſee I could do Any-"thing—He'll come Home pre-"ſently, I dare ſay . . don't be "uneaſy." And went in. I thought, "*Job's* Comforters are ye all."

About ten o' the Clock at Night, I went down to the Bridge Gate again. They were ſhutting it up for the Night, and making up the great Bonfire in the Middle of the Street. This Time I could hardly ſpeak for crying; I ſaid, "Maſter "*Princeps*, I can't think *why* my "Father doeſn't come back! I think "Something muſt have happened!"

"Nay,"

"Nay," ſays he, "what can have "happened? Very likely he has "been unexpectedly detained, and "thinks he ſhall not be back before "the Gate is ſhut, and is too "neighbourly to wiſh to knock me "up. So he takes a Bed with the "Friend he is with.—Now we've "got it all clear, depend upon it!"

"But," ſaid I, "there's no Friend "he can be with, that I know of."

"Why, in *Lime Street!*" ſays he with all the Confidence imaginable.

"*Lime Street?* Dear Maſter "*Princeps*, my Father knows No-"body in *Lime Street*."

—"Don't he though?" ſays he doubtfully. "Well, I'm ſure I think "he ſaid he was going through or "to *Lime Street*, I can't juſtly re-"member which."

I turned away in deep Diſappointment and Trouble. As I paſſed

paſſed under the deep Shade of the Houſes, ſome one coming cloſe up to me, ſaid, "*Cherry!* pretty *Cherry!* "is that you?" But it was not my Father's Voice, and I paſſed on in Diſguſt. I would not faſten the Houſe-door, and ſat juſt within it all Night, a Candle ſet in the Window. I opened my Bible at random, in Hope of Something to hearten and comfort—The Words I lighted on were, "I ſought him, "but could not find him; I called "him, but he gave me no Anſwer." And the Page was wet with my Tears.

As ſoon as Day broke, I was again at the Door. People going to Market early looked at me ſtrangely as they paſſed. It ſtruck me my Appearance was not very tidy, ſo I went in, waſhed and redreſſed myſelf, which refreſhed me a little,

a little, drank a Cup of Milk, and then put on my Hood and went down to the Gate. I ſaid, "Maſter "*Princeps*, I can't think what's "come to my Father."

"Bleſs my Soul!" cries he, "what, has he not been Home all "Night? Then you ſee, he *muſt* "be ſleeping out, and will not have "riſen yet, to diſturb his Friend's "Family. So, go your Ways back, "Miſtreſs *Cherry*, and don't be "fretting; rely on it he will return "as ſoon as he has breakfaſted, "which he cannot have done yet."

So I turned away, ſad at my Heart; and as I paſſed *John Armytage's* Shop, I looked up at *Violet's* Window, and ſaw her dreſſed, and juſt putting back her white Curtains. She looked down on me, and nodded, and ſmiled, but I ſhook my Head ſorrowfully, and turned my

my Face away. Before I reached my own Door, I felt ſome one twitching my Cloak behind, and ſhe comes up to me all panting.

"*Cherry!* dear *Cherry!*" ſays ſhe breathleſſly, "what's the Matter?"

"I've loſt my Father," ſaid I, with filling Eyes.

"Dead!" cries ſhe, looking affrighted.

"He may be," ſaid I, burſting into Tears, "for he has not come "Home all Night."

"Oh, if that's all," ſays ſhe, putting her Arm round me, and drawing me into the Houſe, "all "may yet be well.—How many "Women might cry, *Cherry*, if "they thought their Huſbands and "Fathers were dead, every Time "they ſtayed out all Night! "Come, tell me all about it—." And ſhe entered with ſuch Concern into

into my Grief that its Bitterneſs was allayed.

"Come," ſhe ſaid, "let us give "him till Dinner-time—he may "drop in any Minute, you know, "and if you go looking for him, "you know not where, you may "miſs him. So give him till "Dinner-time, and after that, if he "comes not, go and knock at every "Door in *Lime Street*, if you "will."

And ſhe ſtayed, wiling the ſlow Time as long as ſhe could with talking of this and that. At length, Dinner-time came; I could ſcarce await it, and directly the Clock ſtruck, I ſtarted forth. It occurred to me I would go to *Mark*.

As I approached the Gate, I heard Maſter *Princeps* ſay to the ſecond Gate-keeper, "I'll lay you "a Wager this Girl is coming again "to

" to aſk me why ſhe can't find her " Father."

Inſtead of which, I only ſaid as I came up to him, " I'm going to " look for my Father, Maſter " *Princeps*."

" Well," ſays he, " I wiſh you " may find him with all my Heart, " but it ſeems like looking for a " Pin in a Hayfield—Perhaps he'll " return while you are away . . take " Care where you go, the Streets " and Lanes are dangerous—"

There were People paying Toll; and while I was waiting to paſs, I heard one Man aſk another if he had ſeen the great Plague-pit dug in *Aldgate*, forty Feet long, and twenty Feet deep; adding, he believed many People that were picked up in the Streets were caſt into it before it was well known if they were dead or alive.

I darted

I darted through the Toll-gate the Moment it was clear, and made for *Cheapſide*. Oh! how awful the Change, during a few Weeks! Not a Creature ſtirring, where lately all had been alive—At the Turn of a Lane I met a Man wheeling a dead Perſon in a Hand-barrow, and turning his own Head aſide. Houſes were deſerted or ſilent, marked with the fatal red Croſs. Within one, I heard much Wailing and Sobbing. At length I reached *Mark's* Houſe. 'Twas all ſhut up!—and a Watchman ſat ſmoking on the Door-ſtep. He ſaid, "Young Woman, what "do you want?" I ſaid, "I want "to ſpeak to *Mark Blenkinſop*." . . He ſaid, "Nobody muſt go out or "in—the Houſe is under Viſita-"tion."—My Heart ſank when I remembered *Mark's* Forebodings of himſelf, and I ſaid, "Is he dead?" "I know

"I know not whether he be dead "or no," replied the Watchman, "a Maid-ſervant was put into the "Cart the Night before laſt, and "a 'Prentice the Night before that "—Since then, they've kept mighty "quiet, and aſked for Nothing, "though I've rung the Houſe-bell "two or three Times. But the "Night-watch told me that a "Woman put her Head out of "Window during the Night, and "called out, 'Oh! Death, Death, "Death!' three ſeveral Times."

I ſaid, "Ring the Bell again!"

He did ſo, and pulled it ſo violently this Time, that the Wire broke. We gave each other a blank Look.

"See!" ſaid I, "there's a "Window open on the ſecond "Story—"

"'Tis where the Woman put out "her

" her Head and ſcreeched, during " the Night," ſaid he.

" Could not you get a Ladder," ſaid I, " and look in?"

" Well," ſaid he, " I will, if you " will ſtay here and ſee that no one " comes out while I'm gone."

So I ſaid I would, but I ſhould have been a ſorry Guard had any one indeed ruſhed forth, ſo weak was I and trembling. I thought of *Mark* lying within, perhaps ſtiff and cold.

Preſently the Watchman returned with a Ladder, but it was too ſhort, ſo then he had to go for another. This Time he was much longer gone, ſo that I was almoſt beſide myſelf with waiting. All this Time not a Creature paſſed. At length a Man came along the Middle of the Street, holding a red Rod before him. He cried, " What do you " there?"

"there?" I ſaid, "We know not "whether the Family be dead or "have deſerted the Houſe—a "Watchman has gone for a Ladder "to look through the open "Window." He ſaid, "I will "ſend ſome one to look to it," and paſſed on.

Then the Watchman and another Man appeared, carrying a long Ladder between them. They ſet it againſt the Window, and the Watchman went up. When he had looked in, he cried out in a fearful Voice, "There's a Woman "in white, lying all along on the "Floor, ſeemingly dead, with a "Caſket of Jewels in her Hand— "Shall I go in?"—"Aye, do," I exclaimed. The other Man, hearing talk of Jewels, cried, "Here, come "you down, if you be afraid, and "I'll go in," and gave the Ladder a little

a little Shake; which, however, only made the Watchman at once jump through the Window. Then up came two Men, ſaying, "We "are from my *Lord Mayor*, em- "powered to ſeal up any Property "that may be left, if the Family "indeed be dead."—So they went up the Ladder too, and the other Man had no Mind to go now; and preſently the Watchman comes out of the Houſe-door, looking very pale, and ſays he, "Beſides the "Lady on the Floor, with all her "Jewels about her, there's not a "Soul alive nor dead in the Houſe, "the others muſt have eſcaped over "the back Walls and Out-houſes."

Then my Heart gave a great Beat, for I concluded *Mark* had eſcaped, leaving his Wife to die alone; and now all my Thoughts returned to my Father. I haſtened

to

to one or two Acquaintances of his, who, it was juſt poſſible, might have ſeen him; but their Houſes were one and all ſhut up, and, lying ſome Way apart from each other, this took up much Time. I now became bewildered and almoſt wild, not knowing where to look for him; and catching like a drowning Man at a Straw, I went to *Lime Street*. Here I went all up one Side and all down the other, knocking at every Door that was not padlocked. At firſt I made my Inquiries coherently enough, and explained my Diſtreſs and got a civil Anſwer; but, as I went on and ſtill did not find him, my Wits ſeemed to unſettle, and, when any one came to the Door, which was often not till after much knocking and waiting, I had got nothing to ſay to them but, "Have you ſeen "my

"my Father?" and when they ſtared and ſaid, "Who is your "Father?" I could not rightly bring his Name to Mind. This gave me ſome Sign of Wildneſs, I ſuppoſe, for after a While, the People did not ſo much look ſtrange as pitying, and ſaid, "Who is your "Father, poor Girl?" and waited patiently for me to anſwer. All except one rough Man, who cried fiercely, "In the Dead-pit in *Ald-* "*gate*, very likely, where my only "Child will be to-night." Then I loſt Senſe altogether, and ſhrieked, "Oh! he's in the Pit! *Father!* "*Father!*" and went running through the Streets, a-wringing my Hands. At length a Voice far off anſwered, "Daughter! Daughter! "here I am!" and I ruſhed towards it, crying, "Oh, where? I'm coming! "I'm coming!" And ſo got nearer and

and nearer till it was only juſt at the Turn of the next Street; but when I gained it, I came upon a Party of diſorderly young Men. One of them cries, "Here I am, "Daughter!" and burſt out laughing. But I ſaid, "Oh, you "are not he," and brake away from him.

"Stay, I know all about him," cries another, "was he tall or "ſhort?" Oh, wicked, wicked Men, thought I, 'tis ſuch as you that break Fathers' Hearts!

How I got back to the *Bridge*, I know not. I was put to Bed in a raging Fever. In my Deliration I ſeemed to ſee my Father talking earneſtly with another Man whoſe Face I knew not, and who appeared to hear him with Impatience, and want to leave him, but my Father laid his Hand upon his Arm. Then the

the other, methought, plucked a heavy Bag from under his Cloke, and caſt it towards my Father, crying, "Plague take it and you "too!" Then methought my Father took it up and walked off with it into the Street, but as he went, he changed Colour, ſtopped ſhort, ſtaggered, and fell. Preſently I ſeemed to hear a Bell, and a diſmal Voice crying, "Bring out your "Dead!"—and a Cart came rumbling along, and a Man held a Lanthorn to my Father's Face, and without more Ado, took him up and caſt him into the Cart. Then methought, a Man in the Cart turned the Horſe about, and drove away without waiting to call anywhere elſe, to a diſmal lone Field, lying all in the Blackneſs of Darkneſs, where the Cart turned about, and ſhot a Heap of ſenſeleſs Bodies into

into a great, yawning Pit . . them that a few Hours back had been ſtrong, hearty Men, beautiful Women, ſmiling Children.

CHAP. X.

A Friend in Need.

When I returned to my Reaſon, it was with an inexpreſſible Senſe of Weakneſs and Wearineſs. The firſt Thing I ſaw was dear *Violet's* Face cloſe to mine, her large, dark Eyes fixed full upon me; and as ſoon as ſhe ſaw that I knew her, ſhe exclaims, "*Cherry*, dear *Cherry!* "I thought I had no more Tears "left to ſhed, but I muſt cry again "with Pleaſure now—" and wept over me.

I ſaid, "Is he come back yet?" She

She ſaid, "You muſt only think of "getting well now."

"Ah," I ſaid, "I know he is "not;" and turned my Head away. And ſtill felt her warm Tears dropping over me. They ſeemed to heal where they fell; and preſently, I ſhed Tears too, which cleared my Head, and ſomewhat relieved me; but oh! the Weakneſs!—

I was very ſlow getting well. All the While, dear *Violet* kept with me, read to me, cheered me, cheriſhed me . . oh, what a Friend! How Trouble brings out the real Good in People's Characters, if there be any!

Before I was well able to ſit up, Maſter *Benſkin* ſent in Word he had Something important to ſay to me as ſoon as I was equal to hearing it. I thought he might have got ſome Clue to my Father, and ſaid

I was quite equal to hearing Anything he had to tell. Then he came in, treading on Tip-toe, and looking very awe-ſtricken; and, ſays he, "Miſtreſs *Cherry*,"—taking a Chair as he ſpoke, a good Way off from me,—"the lamented Event "which we may now conſider to "have taken place . . "

"No, Maſter *Benſkin*, no," interrupted I, faintly; "I ſtill hope "there has been *no* lamented "Event—"

"Makes it my Duty," continued he, without minding me, "to tell "you that you need be under no "Uneaſineſs about pecuniary Cir-"cumſtances."

"I am not, I aſſure you," ſaid I. "Oh that I had Nothing worſe "to be uneaſy about!"

"This Houſe," continued he, "was your Father's for ninety-nine "Years,

" Years, and is now yours; and he " moreover had ſaved ſix hundred " Pounds, three hundred of which " he lent me, and three hundred " *Hugh Braidfoot*, we paying him " five per Cent., which we will " continue to pay you, or hand over " to you the Principal, whichever " you like."

" Thank you, Maſter *Benſkin*," ſaid I, " I ſhould wiſh Everything " to continue juſt as it is . . I am " ſure my Father's Money can't be " in better Hands; and I ſhall re- " commence inquiring for him " directly I am ſtrong enough, " which I almoſt am already."

" Ah," ſaid he, with a ſorrowful Smile and a Shake of the Head, " how ſlow Women are to give up " Hope! . . Sure enough, 'tis one " of the cardinal Virtues; but they " practiſe it as if 'twere their " Nature,

" Nature, without making a Merit " of it. I wiſh you well from my " Heart, Miſs *Cherry*."

All this While I was fretting to ſee Maſter *Blower*. I ſaid often to *Violet*, "I wiſh Maſter *Blower* would " look in to ſee me, and talk to me " and pray with me as he uſed to " do with my Mother. Sure, I'm " ſick enow! and he might, for as " long as he has known me, count " me the ſame as one of his own " Congregation."

And *Violet* would make Anſwer, " Indeed, *Cherry*, if you conſider " how the good Man is wearing " himſelf out among his own Flock, " going hither and thither without " ſetting his Life at a Pin's Purchaſe, " ſpending all his Time in Viſita- " tion that is not taken up with the " Services of the Church, you need " not be ſurpriſed he comes not ſo

" far

" far as this, eſpecially as he knows " not of your Affliction nor your " Illneſs."

" How do you, that are not a " Churchwoman, know he does all " you ſay?" ſaid I.

" I had it from the old Woman " that brings the Curds and Whey," returned *Violet;* " ſhe, you know, " is one of his Pariſhioners; and, " from what ſhe ſays of him, it " appears he could not do more if " he were a Diſſenter."

" A Diſſenter, indeed! I admire " that!" ſaid I. " If he were a " ſlothful, timid, ſelf-indulgent " Perſon, you would beſtow all his " Faults on his Church; but be- " cauſe his Light ſhines before " Men, ſo that they cannot help " glorifying his Father which is in " Heaven, you ſay he could hardly " do more if he were a Diſſenter!

" —I ſhall

"—I ſhall go to him as ſoon as "ever I get well."

And ſo I did; while, indeed, I was hardly ſtrong enough for ſo long a Walk; for I had a Notion he would tell me where to find my Father; or comfort me, maybe, if he thought he could not be found. It was now late in *September*.—His Pariſh was one of the worſt in *Whitechapel*,—he lived in a roomy, gloomy old Parſonage-houſe, too large for a ſingle Man, in a Street that was now deſerted and graſs-grown. The firſt Thing I ſaw was a Watchman aſleep on the Steps, which gave me a Pang; for, having heard Maſter *Blower* was ſo active in his Pariſh, I ſomehow had never reckoned on his being among the Sick, though that was a very juſt Reaſon why he ſhould be. I had thought ſo good a Man would lead a charmed

a charmed Life, forgetful that in this World there is often one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, and that if the Good always eſcaped, no Harm would have befallen my Father. However, this ſudden Shock, for ſuch it was, brought Tears into my Eyes, and I began to be at my Wit's End, who ſhould tell me now where to find my Father, and to lament over the Illneſs of my good and dear Friend, Maſter *Blower*. Then I bethought me,—Perhaps he is not in the Houſe, but may have left it in Charge of ſome Woman, who is ill,—if I waken the Watchman, he certainly will not let me in; the Key is graſped firmly in his Hand, ſo firmly that I dare not try to take it, but yet I muſt and will get in.—

Then I obſerved that, in careleſſly

leſſly locking the Door, the Lock had overſhot it, ſo that in Fact, the Door, inſtead of being locked, would not even ſhut. So I ſtept lightly paſt the Watchman and into the Houſe; and the firſt Thing within the Threſhold was a Can of Milk, turned quite ſour, which ſhewed how long it muſt have ſtood without any Body's being able to fetch it. I cloſed the Door ſoftly after me, and went into all the ground-floor Rooms; they were empty and cloſe ſhuttered: the Motes dancing in the Sunbeams that came through the round Holes in the Shutters. Then I went ſoftly up Stairs, and looked timidly into one or two Chambers, not knowing what ghaſtly Sight I might chance upon; but they were tenantleſs. As I ſtood at pauſe in the Midſt of one of them, which was a Sitting-room,

room, and had one or two Chairs out of their Places, as if it had been never ſet to rights ſince it was laſt in Occupation, I was ſtartled by hearing a Man in the Room beyond giving a loud, prolonged Yawn, as though he were ſaying, "Ho, ho, "ho, ho, hum!" Then all was ſilent again: I thought it muſt be Maſter *Blower*, and went forward, but pauſed with my Hand on the Lock. Then I thought I heard a murmuring Voice within; and, ſoftly opening the Door and looking in, perceived a great four-poſt Bed with dark green Curtains drawn cloſe all round it, ſtanding in the Midſt of a dark oaken Floor that had not been bees-waxed recently enough to be ſlippery. Two or three tall, ſtrait-backed Chairs ſtood about; a Hat upon one, a Boot upon another, quite in the Style of Maſter *Blower;*

Blower; and cloſe to the Bed was a Table with Jugs, Cups, and Phials, and a Night-lamp ſtill burning, though 'twas broad Day. The Shutters alſo were partially ſhut, admitting only one long Stream of ſlanting Light over-againſt the Bed; but whether any one were in the Bed, I could not at firſt make out, for all was as ſtill as Death. Preſently, however, from within the Curtains came a ſomewhat thick Voice, exclaiming, "Oh LORD, my "Heart is ready, my Heart is ready! "I will ſing and give Praiſe with the "beſt Member that I have! Awake, "Lute and Harp! I myſelf will "awake right early!"

Here the dear good Man fell a coughing, as if Something ſtuck in his Throat; and I tip-toeing up to the Bed-ſide, withdrew the Curtains and ſoftly ſaid, "Maſter *Blower!*"

Never

Never ſhall I forget my firſt Sight of him! There he lay on his Back, with Everything quite clean and freſh about him, not routed and tumbled as moſt Men's would have been, but as ſmooth as if juſt mangled:—his Head, without e'er a Nightcap, lying ſtraight on his Pillow, his Face the Mirror of Compoſedneſs and Peaceification, and his great, brown Eyes, glowing with ſome ſteady, not feveriſh Light, turned ſlowly round upon me, as if freſh from beholding ſome beatific, ſolemnifying Sight.

"Why, *Cherry*," ſays he, looking much pleaſed, "are you come "to look on me before I die? "I thought I had taken my "laſt Sight of all below,"—and reaching out his Hand to me from under the Bedclothes, I was ſhocked to perceive how it was waſted:

waſted: every Knuckle a perfect Knob.

"Don't touch me!" cries he, plucking it away again, and burying it out of Sight,—"I forgot you "hadn't had the Plague.—What a "ſelfiſh Fellow I am!—How's your "dear Father, *Cherry?*"

I could not withhold myſelf from weeping, and was unable to anſwer.

"Ah, I ſee how it is," ſays he kindly, "poor *Cherry!* poor *Cherry!* "'the Righteous periſh and no "Man layeth it to Heart,'—I heard "a Voice ſay, 'Write: Bleſſed are "the Dead which die in the LORD. "Yea, ſaith the Spirit, for they reſt "from their Labours.' . . I ſhall "ſee him before you will, *Cherry.* "Go Home, Child, go Home, . . "this Air is fraught with Danger."

I ſaid, "I am not afraid of it, "Sir,—

" Sir,— I would rather ſtay a While " with you."

" Well, then," ſaid he, " juſt " give me a Drink of Water, or " Anything liquid you can find; for I have had Nothing but what " I could help myſelf to, theſe " twenty-four Hours. My Throat " is ſo bad, I cannot ſwallow Any- " thing ſolid . . Oh! Oh!—" And as he held back his Throat to drink, I noticed the Plague Swellings.

" That will do nicely, now," ſighed he, when I had ſmoothed his Pillow, " and now go, I prithee, " dear *Cherry*, and look after poor " *Dorcas*, who, I fear, muſt be " dead or dying ſomewhere about " the Houſe."

So I did as he bade me; and, as I knew ſhe was not on the Floor below, I went in queſt of her up Stairs. *Dorcas* had lived with Maſter

Maſter *Blower* ever ſince he commenced Houſekeeping; and had had the Help of a younger Maid, who now, it ſeemed, had left, or died. She was a Widow-woman in her third Score, eccentric, like her Maſter, in ſome Matters; but withal, of the ſweeteſt, pleaſanteſt Countenance! and of pleaſant Conditions too, ſo that they were well matched. She preferred being called Miſtreſs *Peach;* but Maſter *Blower* liked calling her *Dorcas*, and carried his Point.

I found her in the upper Story, lying all acroſs her Bed, dreſſed, but more dead than alive. "Alas! "young Woman," ſays ſhe . . . "What! is it Miſtreſs *Cherry?* "Heaven be praiſed! How is my "Maſter? Doth he live yet?"

I ſaid, Yes, and I hoped was going on well.

"Ah,"

"Ah," ſays ſhe, "I left him at "Death's Door, but could no lon- "ger keep about myſelf; ſo, ſet him "ſtraight as well as I could, and "then crawled up here, thinking to "bundle my Mattreſs down Stairs, "and at all Events die within hearing "of him. But 'twas quite beyond "my Strength . . I fell all along, "and here I've been ever ſince."

Then ſhe began to groan terribly, but I made her as comfortable as I could, dreſſed her Throat, perſuaded her to ſwallow a little cooling Drink, and looſened her Clothes; all which ſhe took very thankfully, but then became reſtleſs about her Maſter, and prayed me to go down to him, for he wanted me more than ſhe did.

So I returned to Maſter *Blower*, whom I now found a good deal more ſuffering and feveriſh than when

when I left him, and beginning to toſs about. I quite gave up all Intention of leaving the Houſe, yet thought *Violet* might be uneaſy about me; therefore I ſtepped down to beg the Watchman to ſend a Meſſage to her; but found the Houſe-door locked.

On my rapping againſt it and calling, he unlocked it and looked in. "Hallo, young Woman," ſays he, "how came you here?"

"I ſtepped in while you were "aſleep," ſaid I, "the Door being "ajar."

"Aſleep? that's a pretty Tale to "tell of me," quoth he, "I wonder "if *you* wouldn't feel ſleepy ſome-"times, ſitting from Morn to Night "on a Door-ſtep, full in the Sun!"

"I want to tell no Tales," ſaid I, "but only deſire to ſend Word to "my Friends on the *Bridge* that I "cannot

" cannot return to them at preſent,
" being wanted here."

" Return? of courſe you cannot," ſays he, " why, do you ſuppoſe " Perſons are to be allowed to walk " in and out of Houſes under Viſita- " tion at their Will? 'Tis clear " againſt my *Lord Mayor's* Orders."

This had eſcaped me; however, it made no Difference; and he engaged to let *Violet* know the Cauſe of my Detention. Then I returned to my Charges, and, to my great Surpriſe, found *Dorcas* had crawled nearly all down the Flight of Stairs between her and Maſter *Blower*, and was now lying all along. She ſaid, " I thought I " muſt ſee how Maſter was . . if " you will but tumble the Mattreſs " down, Miſtreſs *Cherry*, I'll lie " juſt within his Door,—then you " won't have to run up and down

"Stairs ſo often." It did, indeed, make it eaſier for me to attend to them both; and truly I never had ſuch a Night before nor ſince; for though my dear Mother's Sufferings had been long drawn out and very ſad to witneſs, they had never amounted to acute Agony. The Fever of both ran very high all Night, and it ſeemed to me that Maſter *Blower* in his Deliration went through the whole Book of *Job* in his Head, from the diſjointed Fragments he uttered here and there. Alſo he ſeemed much argufying with an impenitent Sinner in his Flock, his Reaſonings and tender Perſuaſives with whom were enough to have melted a Stone. As to Miſtreſs *Peach*, I muſt ſay her Thoughts ran moſtly on her Jams, . . . ſhe conceited herſelf opening Pot after Pot and finding every

every one fermented; and kept exclaiming in a doleful Voice, "Oh dear, here's another Biſhop's "Wig!" So that, what with being ready to laugh at her, and to cry over him, I was quite carried out of myſelf, and away from my own Troubles. Towards Day-dawn they both became quiet; I fumigated the Room, bathed their Temples with Vinegar, moiſtened their Mouths, and then knelt down in a Corner to pray; after which, I dozed a little. I had heard the Death-cart going its melancholy Round during the Night; and had felt thankful we had no Dead to be carried out.

In the Morning, both my Patients ſeemed bettering. *Dorcas*, with my Help, got to her Maſter's Bedſide, and looked in on him. "Dear Sir," ſays ſhe, "how are you now?"

"Somewhat

"Somewhat eaſier, but very "thirſty, Miſtreſs *Peach*," ſays he.

"Oh dear, Sir," ſays ſhe, "don't "call me Miſtreſs *Peach*, or I ſhall "think you're going to die. I like "*Dorcas* beſt now. What a Mercy "it was, Sir, Miſtreſs *Cherry* came "in as ſhe did, for we were both "at Death's Door. I dare ſay, Sir, "you miſſed me?"

"How ſhould I do otherwiſe?" ſaid he, ſpeaking very thick, and with evident Pain. . . "I've got a "Waſp's Neſt in my Throat, I "think. . . How ſhould I do other-"wiſe, I ſay, when no one came "near me for twenty-four Hours?"

"Ah, Sir," ſays ſhe, "I'm ſure "I beg your Pardon for behaving "ſo ill,—for *being* ſo ill, that is; "but indeed I could not help it. "I thought," continues ſhe, turning to me, "I wouldn't die, as 'twere, "juſt

"juſt under his Noſe, ſo crawled "out of Sight; but put Everything "near him that he could want "before I took the Liberty of "leaving him; and did the beſt "Thing I could for him at parting, "by putting a fine drawing Plaſter "round his Throat. . . Pray, Sir, "did it draw?"

"Draw?" cries he, with the firſt indignant Flaſh I ever ſaw from his pleaſant Eyes . . . and 'twas half humourous, too,—"Like a Cart-"horſe! I ſhould have been dead "Hours ago, you Woman, had I "kept it on!"

Sorrowful as I was, I could not help burſting out a-laughing, and he did ſo too, when ſuddenly ſtopping ſhort and looking very odd,—"I don't know whatever has "given way in my Throat," ſays he, "but verily I think that Laugh "has

" has ſaved me! Here! give me " ſome Water, or Milk, or Any- " thing to drink, for I can ſwallow " now."

So I gave him ſome Water, and ran down Stairs for ſome Milk, the Night-watchman having promiſed to ſet ſome within the Door. When I got back, there was quite another Expreſſion on his Face; compoſed and thankful. *Dorcas* was ſhedding Tears as ſhe tended him, quite thoughtleſs of herſelf.

" Now, *Cherry*," ſays he, " do " perſuade this dear Woman to lie " down and take Care of herſelf, " for ſhe has had Faith enough in " her famous Plaſters to have put " one about her own Throat, and " I know what ſhe muſt be ſuffer- " ing, or will have to ſuffer."

So I gently led her back to her Mattreſs, and then, ſitting down by Maſter

Maſter *Blower*, fed him with ſome Sponge-cake that was none the worſe for being ſtale when ſopped in Milk, warm from the Cow. He took it with great Satisfaction, and ſaid he hoped I ſhould not think him greedy when I remembered how long he had faſted. Then he would not be peaceified till I went down Stairs and breakfaſted by myſelf: telling me his Mind to him a Kingdom was, or ſomewhat to that Effect, which I could thoroughly believe. When I came back, *Dorcas* ſeemed ſleeping ſoundly, though not very eaſily. Maſter *Blower* had got the ſame heavenly Look as when I firſt ſaw him. I aſked him if there were Anything I could do for him. He ſaid, Yes, I could read him the fortieth Pſalm. When I had done ſo, he ſaid, "And now you can read

"me

"me the hundred and ſixteenth." That, he ſaid, would do to reflect upon, and I might go my Ways now; he ſhould want Nothing more for a good While. So I ſat down in a great Arm-chair with a tall Back, wherein, the Chair being mighty comfortable, and I ſomewhat o'erwearied with watching, (not being very ſtrong yet,) or ever I was aware I fell aſleep, which certainly was not very good Nurſing nor good Manners.

When I woke up, which may perhaps have been not ſo ſoon as it ſeemed to me, "Well, Miſtreſs "*Cherry*," ſays Maſter *Blower*, ſomewhat ironically, "I hope you "have had a good Nap. A Penny "for your Dream."

I ſaid it had been a wonderful pleaſant one . . . too wonderful, I feared, to come true.

"Well

" Well, let's have it, nevertheleſs," ſays he; " I like hearing wonderful " Dreams ſometimes, when I've " Nothing better to do. So, now " for it."

—When I came to think it over, however, it ſeemed ſo different, waking and ſleeping, that I deſpaired of making it ſeem to him Anything like what it had ſeemed to me.

"Come," ſaid he, " you're making " a new one."

" Oh, no, Sir!" ſaid I, "I would " not do ſuch a Thing on any " Account.—My Dream was this; " —only I fear you will call it a " comical one. . . Methought I was " walking with you, Sir, (I beg " your Pardon for dreaming of you, " which I ſhould not have done if " I had not been nurſing of you, " I dare ſay)—"

" Pardon's

"Pardon's granted," ſays he. "Go on."

"I thought, Sir, I was walking "with you in a Garden all full of "Roſes, Pinks, Crownations, Co-"lumbines, Jolly-flowers, Hearts-"eaſe, and—and . . "

"A Kiſs behind the Garden-"gate," ſays he.

I was quite thrown out; and ſaid, I did not believe there was ſuch a Flower.

"Oh yes, there is," ſays he,— "Well, but the Reſt of your "Dream—"

"That's all, Sir."

"*All?*" cries he.

"Yes, Sir; only that we went "on walking and walking, and the "Garden was ſo mighty pleaſant."

"Why, you told me there was "Something wonderful in it!" ſays he.

I ſaid

I ſaid it *had* ſeemed wonderful at the Time—

"That there was *not* a Kiſs be-
"hind the Garden-gate," ſays he laughing. "O fie, *Cherry!*"

I felt quite aſhamed; and ſaid it was very ſilly to tell Dreams, or to believe in them.

"Why, yes," ſaid he ſeriouſly,
"it *is* fooliſh to believe in the diſ-
"jointed Images thrown together
"by a diſtempered Fancy; though
"aforetime it oft pleaſed our
"HEAVENLY FATHER to commu-
"nicate his Will to his Servants
"through the Avenues of their
"ſleeping Senſes. How ſhould you
"and I be walking in a Garden
"together? There are no Gardens
"in *Whitechapel, Cherry*. In *Berk-*
"*ſhire*, indeed, my Brother the
"Squire has a Garden ſomething
"like what you deſcribe, full of
"Roſes,

"Roſes, Pinks, and Gilly-flowers,
"with great, flouriſhed iron Gates,
"and broad, turfen Walks, and
"Arbours, like green Wigs, and
"clipped Hedges full of Snails, and
"Ponds full of Fiſh. If I go
"down there to get well, *Cherry*,
"as peradventure I may, for I ſhall
"want ſetting up again before I'm
"fit for Work—(I've fallen away
"till I'm as thin as *Don Quixote!*)
"I'll aſk his Wife to invite you
"down, *Cherry*, to ſee the Garden;
"and then we'll look up all thoſe
"Flowers we were talking about."

"Thank you kindly, Sir," ſaid I, ſorrowfully, "but I don't think "I can go . . I muſt be looking for "my Father."

"Your Father!" cries he, in Amaze. "Why, dear *Cherry*, I "thought you told me he was "dead!"

I tried

I tried to anſwer him, but could not, and fell a-ſobbing.

"Come," ſays he, quite moved, "I want to hear all this ſad Story."

When I was compoſed enough to tell it him, he liſtened with deep Attention, and I ſaw a Tear ſteal down his Cheek.

"*Cherry*," ſays he at length, "you muſt give over hoping he "will return, my Dear. There is "not a Likelihood of it. Conſider "how long a Time has elapſed "ſince he went forth; and how "many, as dear to their Families as "your Father to you, have been "cut off in the Streets at a "Moment's Notice, and carried off "to the Dead-pits before they "were recogniſed. For ſuch awful "Caſualties the Good are not un-"prepared. Inſtead of carrying "back Infection and Deſolation to "his

" his Home, and lingering for " Hours and Days in unſpeakable " Agonies, the good Man was " doubtleſs carried at once to the " Boſom of his GOD."

Then he ſpake Words that killed Hope, and yet brought Healing; and after weeping long and plentifully, I began to ſee Things as he did, and to feel convinced I ſhould ſee my Father's Face no more: which, indeed, I never did.

CHAP. XI.

Diſtinction between would & ſhould.

Dorcas, who continued very ill all this Day, began thereafter to amend, and was able to take the ſole Night-watch. But the Watchman would not let me go forth, though he would ſend my Meſſages to *Violet*, and give me the Packages of Clothing and ſo forth that *Violet* ſent me. However, one Day a Doctor called, and gave as his Reaſon for not coming before, that he had been ill himſelf. And he ſaid both my Patients were in ſuch a fair Way of Recovery, that he thought

thought in another Week I might leave the Houſe without Danger to myſelf or others, only attending to the proper Fumigations.

Maſter *Blower* now ſat up in his eaſy Chair, half wakeful, half dozing, for he was too weak to read much. But he liked me to read to him, which I did for Hours together; and the Subject-matter of the Book often gave Riſe to much pleaſant Talk, inſomuch that I began to be ſecretly and ſelfiſhly ſorry that the Time was ſo near at Hand when he would be well enough to do without me.

At other Times I got him to talk to me about the Country-houſe of his Brother, the Squire, wherein he himſelf had been born, and had ſpent all his boyiſh Days. And when I heard him tell about the little ivy-covered Church, and the pretty

pretty Churchyard planted with Flowers, and the ruſtic Congregation in their red Cloaks and white Frocks, and the Village Choir with their Pipes and Rebecks, it ſeemed to me I would rather, a thouſand Times, be Vicar or even Curate of ſuch a Place as that than have ever ſuch a large, grand Living in *Whitechapel*. And ſo I told him.

At other Times I ſat ſewing quite ſilent by the Window, leaving him to doze if he could; and ſometimes I could ſee without looking up, that his Eye would reſt on me for a good While at a Time. I did not care a Pin about it, and made as though I took no Notice.

"*Cherry*," ſays he, after one of theſe Ruminations, "what have the "Men been about, that you have "never got married?"

I plucked up my Spirit on this; and, "Sir," ſaid I, "if you can tell "me of any ſuitable Anſwer I can "poſſibly make to ſuch a Queſtion "as that, I'll be much obliged to you "for it, and will make Uſe of it!"

"Well!" ſays he, "it *was* a "queer Queſtion . . . only, the "Thing ſeems ſo wonderful to "me! Such a pretty Girl as "you were when I firſt knew "you!"

"Ah, that was a long While "ago, Sir," ſaid I, threading my Needle.

"It was!" ſaid he, decidedly; and then looking at me in an amuſed Kind of Way, to ſee how I took it. "A long While ago, "as you ſay, *Cherry!* And, do "you know, I think exactly the "ſame of you now, that I did "then!"

"I am

"I am very much obliged to "you, Sir," ſaid I; and went to make him a Bread-pudding.

Another Time, we fell to talking about the Awfulneſs of the Viſitation, which, he ſaid, he feared would make no laſting Impreſſion on the People. And he ſpoke much about individual Sins helping to bring down national Chaſtiſements; and individual Interceſſions and Supplications inviting Forgiveneſs of general Tranſgreſſions; quoting *Daniel*, and *Abraham*, and *Jeremiah*, "Run ye to and fro "through the Streets of *Jeruſalem*, "and ſee now and know, and ſeek "in the broad Places thereof, if ye "can find a Man that executeth "Judgment, that ſeeketh the Truth; "and I will pardon it."

Another Time, feeling weaker than common, he began to deſpond about

about getting down to his Brother the Squire's. I ſaid, "Dear Sir, if "you are not equal to ſo long a "Journey, you can come, for "Change of Air, to your old "Quarters on the Bridge."

"Ah, *Cherry*," ſaid he, faintly ſmiling, "what would Folks ſay if "I did that?"

"Why, what *ſhould* they ſay, "Sir?" ſaid I.

"I'm not conſidering what they "*ſhould* ſay," ſaid he; "what they "*would* ſay, *Cherry*, would probably "be, that I meant to marry you; "or ought to mean it."

I ſaid I did not ſuppoſe they would or could ſay any ſuch Thing; I being ſo long known on the Bridge,—and he of his Years—"

"Humph!" ſaid he, "I am but "forty-four! To hear you talk, "one

"one might think I was a—" . . . I forget what Sort of an Arian he called himſelf,—"Do "you know what that means, "*Cherry?*"

I ſaid, I believed it was ſome Sort of a Diſſenter. On which he laughed outright; and ſaid it meant ſixty or ſeventy Years of Age, I forget which.

"And I'm not quite ſuch an old "Codger as that," ſaid he, "ſo I "won't accept your kind Invitation, "though I thank you heartily for "it. But we muſt not let our "Good be evil ſpoken of."

All this was ſpoken in ſuch a ſimple, genial, attaching Sort of a Way,—for his Manners were always gentle and well-nurtured,—that it only went to make me like him more and more, and think what a Privilege it was to be thus in hourly

hourly Communion with Maſter *Blower*.

Parting Time came at laſt. It was my own Fault if I left not that Houſe a wiſer, better, and happier Woman. *Dorcas* and I ſaw him ſtart off for *Berkſhire;* and there was a Tear in my Eye, when he took my Hand to bid me Farewell.

"*Cherry*," ſaid he, ſtill holding my Hand, and looking at me with great Goodneſs and Sweetneſs, "I "ſhall never forget that to you, "under Heaven, I owe my Life. "And, by the Way, there is Some- "thing I have often thought of "naming to you, only that it never "occurred to me at the proper "Time . . a very odd Circumſtance. "—When I eſcaped to *Holland*, "and, as ſome People thought, was "in Want of Money, I found ſeven "gold

" gold Pieces in the Inſide of one
" of my Slippers! Who could have
" put them there, do you think?
" Ah, *Cherry!*—There! GOD bleſs
" you!"

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Camping out in Epping Foreſt.

When I returned Home, my Neighbours looked ſtrangely on me, as though I were one riſen from the Dead, after nurſing two People through the Plague without Hurt. I ſaid not much, however, to any of them except to *Violet*.

When I had told her all I had to tell, ſhe ſaid, "Well, I think the "Tale ends rather flatly: you and "Maſter *Blower* might as well have "made a Match of it."

"Truly, *Violet*," ſaid I, "I think "Women of our Age may be "capable

" capable of a diſintereſted Action,
" without Queſtion of Match-
" making."

" As to Women of *our* Age," retorted ſhe, " ſpeak for yourſelf,
" if you pleaſe! You may make
" out yourſelf to be as old as you
" will; but I mean to ſtick at
" Twenty-eight!"

I ſaid not another Word, but ſecretly wondered how ſtrangely tender ſome People are on the Subject of Age. Even Maſter *Blower*, who had owned to Forty-four, did did not like me to reckon him at Fifty.

It was now quite the latter End of *October*, the Diſtemper was abating, and People were beginning to venture back to their Homes, and a few Shops were re-opened. *Hugh Braidfoot* and his Family returned among the reſt. But too heedleſs

heedleſs an Expoſure to the Infection yet lingering among us cauſed the Diſtemper to rage again with great Fury before it abated for good.

I now kept myſelf cloſe, and ſpent the Chief of the Day at my Needle or Book, working much for the Poor, who were like enough to be deſtitute in the Winter. Firſt, however, I put on Mourning for my poor, dear Father, whom I could not bear to deny this Mark of Remembrance, though the Mortality being ſo great, People had quite left off wearing Black for their Friends. Much he dwelt in my ſad, ſolitary Thoughts; and when they ran not on him, they chiefly ſettled on Maſter *Blower*. The more I conſidered their Characters, the more Beauty I found in them.

I never opened the Shop-ſhutters now,

now, except for a little Light. Trade was utterly ſtagnant; and my Father's Buſineſs had dropped with him. The little I might have done in the Perfumery Line, had the Town not been empty, would not have been worth ſpeaking of: it was a Mercy, therefore, that my dear Father had left me well provided.

One Evening, when it was getting too duſk to work or read, and I was falling into a Muſe, a tall Shadow darkened the Door, which happened to be ajar, and the next Moment a Man whom I did not immediately recogniſe, entered the Parlour and ſtepped up to me.

"*Cherry!* dear *Cherry!*" he ſaid in a ſtifled Voice, and took me in his Arms with a Brother's Affection. It was poor *Mark.*

"Dear *Mark!*" I ſaid, "where

"*have*

"*have* you been? Oh, how often "have I thought of you!"

"Aye, *Cherry*, well you might, "and pray for me, too," ſaid he, ſomewhat wildly. "Oh, what a "Tale I have to tell you!—You will either hate or deſpiſe me."

"You are ill, very ill," ſaid I, looking fearfully at his haggard Face; "let me give you Something "before you ſay another Word."

"Wine, then," ſaid he; and drank with avidity the Glaſs I poured out, and then filled it again himſelf. "Thanks, dear *Cherry!*— "will my Uncle be coming in?"

I looked at him and at my Dreſs, and could not ſpeak; but there was no need—"Ah!"—ſaid he; and wrung my Hand, and then dropped it.

"*Cherry*," ſaid he, after a Moment's Pauſe, "you know how "afraid

" afraid I was of the Plague, and
" how my Wife taunted me for it,
" and for taking the commoneſt
" Precautions. She herſelf braved
" it, defied it; ſecure in her Amulet
" and Fortune-telling. What was
" worſe, ſhe cruelly expoſed her
" Servants to it, for the mereſt
" Trifles. We had Words about it
" often: bitter Words, at laſt—She
" accuſed me, utterly without Foun-
" dation, of caring more for the
" Servant-girl than for her, reviled
" me for tempting my own Fate by
" Fear; finally, ſaid I ſhould be no
" great Loſs, for I had never cared
" much for her, nor ſhe for me.
" All this embittered me againſt
" her. Well, the poor Maid caught
" the Plague at the Butchers' Stalls,
" and, the next Night, was in the
" dead Cart. The following Day,
" our youngeſt 'Prentice died. The
" other

" other decamped in the Night. I
" now became nearly Mad with
" Fear and Anger; and, finding my
" Wife would not ſtir, or at leaſt,
" as ſhe ſaid, 'not yet,' I conſidered
" that Self-preſervation was the firſt
" Law of Nature; and, taking a
" good Supply of Money with me,
" I left the Houſe in the Night.
" Fear of being driven back was
" my ſole Feeling till I got clear
" out of *London;* then, I began to
" have an Impreſſion I had done
" wrong. But 'twas Death, 'twas
" Madneſs to think of turning back.
" On I went . . .

" It had been my Impreſſion,
" *Cherry*, that, with plenty of
" Money in my Pocket, I could
" make my Way wherever I would;
" but now, in whatever Direction I
" went, I came upon a Watchman,
" who, becauſe I had no Clean Bill
" of

" of Health to ſhow, would not let
" me paſs. At length, after run-
" ning hither and thither, through-
" out the Night, I came upon a
" couple of Men, with a ſmall Cart
" and Horſe. They ſeemed to be
" in the ſame Strait as myſelf, and
" talked of fetching a Compaſs to
" *Bow*. I aſked them to let me
" join them, and they conſented.
" They were a rough Sort of
" Fellows; one it ſeemed had de-
" ſerted his Mother, the other his
" Wife. Their Conduct, and their
" brutal Way of talking of it, only
" made mine ſeem more ugly.

" On *Bow Bridge* the Watch
" would have queſtioned us, but we
" croſſed the Road into a narrow
" Way leading to *Old Ford*. After-
" wards we got on to *Homerton* and
" *Hackney*, and at length into the
" northern Road. Here we went
" on

" on till we ſaw ſome Men running
" towards us; then we ſtruck into
" a Lane, halted at a Barn, and had
" ſome Bread and Cheeſe. The
" Food was theirs, but I paid for
" my Share; and I ſaw them curi-
" ouſly eyeing my Money. After-
" wards they aſked one or two
" Queſtions about my Reſources,
" which I did not much like.

" Well, we kept on till we were
" many Miles from *London*, occa-
" ſionally dodging Villages and
" Conſtables. At Nightfall we
" reached the Skirt of a Wood.
" Here my Companions propoſed
" to ſleep; but as ſoon as they were
" fairly off, I ſtole away. I wan-
" dered a long Way from them in
" the Wood; at length took re-
" fuge in a Cow-ſhed. I thought
" I heard Voices, not far off,
" which made me uneaſy; how-
" ever,

" ever, I was ſo tired that I fell
" aſleep.

" As ſoon as Day dawned, I made
" off; and, not knowing which
" Track to take, went on at Random,
" till I came to a large old Barn.
" To my Surpriſe, I heard ſome
" one praying within. I looked in,
" and ſaw, not one, but a dozen
" Men, and two or three Women
" and Children. I ſtood reverently
" aſide till the old Man had done,
" and heard him pray that they
" might all continue to be ſpared
" from the awful Viſitation. When
" they uncovered their Faces, I
" ſtept forward, on which there
" was a loud Cry, and they warned
" me off. It was to no Uſe
" ſpeaking, they would not hear
" me as I had no Paſſport. Diſ-
" pirited and hungry, I ſtrayed
" away till I came to the Skirt of

" the Wood, in Sight of a Cluſter
" of Houſes. I was about to make
" for them, when three Men, with
" a Pitchfork, Bludgeon, and Horſe-
" whip ruſhed upon me and collared
" me, ſaying, 'Here's one of them!'
" —I ſtruggled, and ſaid, 'One of
" whom? I belong to no Party,
" and am a healthy, innocent Man.'
" 'That ſounds well,' ſaid one of
" them, 'but we gueſs you are
" one of a Gang that, after threat-
" ening and intimidating our Town
" yeſterday, broke into a lone Farm-
" houſe laſt Night; ſo we'll take
" you before a Magiſtrate.' 'Do
" ſo,' ſaid I, 'for it will be better
" than ſtarving in the Wood, and
" I ſhall be able to clear myſelf.'
" So, after a Time, finding I made
" no Reſiſtance, they gave over
" dragging me, and let me walk by
" myſelf, only keeping cloſe about
" me,

" me, with an ugly Bull-dog at my
" Heels. However, I did not feel
" over-ſure, *Cherry*, that my Story
" would ſatisfy the Magiſtrate, ſo
" when we reached a ſmall Public-
" houſe where we found a Conſtable,
" I privately ſlipped a Half-crown
" into his Hand, and he, after a
" little Parley, gave it as his Opinion
" that I was an honeſt Man, whereon
" the others deſiſted from giving
" me in Charge. But they would
" by no Means admit me into the
" Houſe, only brought out ſome
" Bread and Beer, and ſet them at
" a Diſtance, and then went away
" while I ate and drank.

" There ſeemed Nothing to do
" but to turn again into the Wood;
" and as I was without Object,
" foot-ſore, and ſpiritleſs, I pauſed
" at the firſt inviting Spot I came
" to, and caſt myſelf along under a
" Tree.

" Tree. Here I ſuppoſe I ſlept a
" good While: when I awoke, it
" was with a ſtrange Senſe of De-
" preſſion, and it occurred to me
" I might be plague-ſtricken after
" all. As if I could fly yet from
" the Diſtemper, if that were the
" Caſe, I reſolved to be moving;
" for I had no Mind to die like a
" Rat in a Hole. Juſt then I heard
" Voices cloſe on the other Side
" the Tree; and, eyeing the Speakers
" between the Branches, could make
" out a numerous Band of Men and
" a few Women, who were eating
" and drinking. I did not like their
" Appearance much, and thought
" of retreating, when one of them,
" ſeeing me ſtir, cries,—'A Spy!'
" and drags me into the Midſt. I
" was pretty roughly handled till
" they ſettled it to their Minds I
" was a harmleſs Sort of a Fellow;
" and

" and then they told me they would
" let me join the Crew if I would
" caſt my Lot among them, and
" put whatever I had about me into
" the common Stock. I was no
" Ways minded to do this; however,
" I gave them a few Shillings,
" which, after a little Demur, they
" took, and I then was free of the
" Company. I ſoon had Reaſon to
" apprehend they were the Band
" who had affrighted the Townſmen
" the Day before, and plundered
" the Farm in the Night; and it
" ſeemed as if a ſelect Council of
" them were concerting Something
" of the Sort again, though they
" did not invite me to participate.
" As this was not the Sort of Com-
" pany I had any Mind to aſſociate
" with, I dragged through the
" Afternoon and Evening as well
" as I could, moſtly apart. They
" then

" then began to put up Booths and
" Tents for the Night, at which I
" was glad to aſſiſt, rather than do
" Nothing; but I lay a little Way
" off, under a Tree. In the Night
" I felt ſome one lugging at the
" little Parcel of Clothing I laid
" my Head upon.—I hit a Blow at
" Random, which made whoever it
" was move off without a Word;
" and then I thought it was Time
" for me to move off too. I got
" away unperceived, and could not
" ſettle again all Night. When
" Day broke, I was in a Part of
" the Foreſt that was new to me. .
" The Sun was ſhining on ſome
" gnarled old Oaks, and along green
" Glades; there were Birds ſinging,
" Hares running acroſs the Graſs,
" and Wild-flowers overhanging a
" little Brook of clear Water. Oh,
" *Cherry!* how I ſhould have en-
" joyed

"joyed idling in ſuch a Place if I "had had a quiet Mind!

"I drank ſome Water, and waſhed "my Face; and juſt then I ſaw "ſome Women paſſing through the "Trees, carrying large, country "Loaves, and tin Cans of Milk. "They did not ſee me, but ſet "down their Burthens near a large "Stone. Then they retreated and "ſtood a little Way off, and pre- "ſently, two pretty-looking Girls "came tripping out of the Wood, "took up the Loaves, emptied the "Milk into brown Pitchers of their "own, put ſome Silver on the "Stone, and cried, 'Here's your "Money, good People!'

"Then they returned into the "Wood, and I followed them. I "ſaid, 'Shall I carry one of your "Pitchers?' they looked affrighted, "and cried, 'Pray, Sir, keep off . . "how

" how do we know that you may
" not have the Plague?' I ſaid, ' I
" aſſure you, it was to eſcape from
" the Plague that I came into the
" Wood, and here I ſeem likely to
" ſtarve, though I have Plenty of
" Money.' They looked at one
" another, and ſaid, ' If it be true,
" his Caſe is hard,—let us tell my
" Father.' They went away, and by
" and by an elderly Man came to me
" from among the Trees. He queſ-
" tioned me very narrowly, and ſatiſ-
" fying himſelf at length that I was
" both ſound and reſpectable, he
" admitted me to their little En-
" campment, which conſiſted of five
" or ſix little Huts, a Family in
" each; beſides a few Cabins the
" ſingle Men had ſet up for them-
" ſelves. I did the like, added my
" Stock to theirs, and continued
" with them all the Time their

" Encampment

"Encampment laſted, which was
"till Yeſterday, when, the Weather
"turning cold, and the News of
"the Abatement of the Diſtemper
"having reached us, we reſolved to
"return to our Homes.—I could
"make you quite in Love with our
"Camp Life, *Cherry*, if I choſe to
"enlarge upon ſome Things, and
"leave others out of Sight,—in
"ſhort, make it appear the Thing
"it was not. But, honeſtly ſpeak-
"ing, though we were very thankful
"to buy our Safety at the Price
"of much Inconvenience, all the
"Romance of our Situation ſoon
"faded away, and we were right
"glad to ſet our Faces homewards
"again, even without being fully
"certified we could do ſo with
"Impunity.

"But, to what a Home did I
"return! The Houſe was pad-

"locked

"locked up, and Everything in "the Poſſeſſion of the *Lord Mayor*. "And, from a Watchman out "of Employ, who was taking "Care of a Houſe over the "Way, and who did not know "me, I heard the Circumſtances "of my Wife's frightful Death. "Oh, *Cherry!* we did not care "for each other much; but I fear "it was cowardly and cruel of me "to forſake her!"

—And *Mark* laid his Head on his Arms and wept. Preſently he ſaid, "What to do, I know not. "I ſhall be able, by Application "to the *Lord Mayor* to-morrow, "to get back my Houſe and "Property; but—to tell you the "Truth—I have no great Fancy "to go back there; at any Rate, "till the Houſe has been well "fumigated. So that . . . will you "take

" take Compaſſion on me, and let
" me return awhile to my old
" Quarters, *Cherry?*"
Of courſe I ſaid I would.

CHAP. XIII.

Ghoſts.

It was now Supper-time; and *Mark*, having leſſened the Senſe of his Troubles by telling of them, although he began by thinking he could not eat a Mouthful, ended by making a very hearty Supper. Indeed, he ſo much commended the one or two ſimple Diſhes ſet upon Table, and ſpoke ſo ſtrongly, though briefly, on the Subject of good and bad Cookery, that, as it had been his Diſpoſition to be contented with Anything that was ſet before him in his unmarried Days, I ſet

I ſet it all down to the Diſcomfort of his late Life in the Foreſt. Afterwards I was diſpoſed to change my Mind about this, and to decide that Miſtreſs *Blenkinſop*, who in their early married Days had pampered and petted him amazingly, (whereby his good Looks had ſuffered no little,) had really deſtroyed the ſimple Taſtes which were once ſo becoming in him, and had made him Something of an Epicure.

After the Table was cleared, he drew near me again, and with real Concern in his Manner, preſſed me to tell him about my Father. I did ſo from firſt to laſt, with many Tears; adding thereunto my nurſing of Maſter *Blower*. He ſighed a good many Times as I went on, and after I had done; exclaiming at laſt, "What a Difference between "you and me!"

"All

"All People have not the ſame "Qualifications," ſaid I.

"No," ſaid he, and ſeemed to think I had now hit the right Nail on the Head.

"And *Violet*—" ſaid he, after a Pauſe, and colouring deeply. "Is "ſhe quite well, *Cherry?*"

"Quite," I ſaid; and could think of Nothing more to ſay.

"I wonder," ſaid he in a low Voice, as if he were almoſt afraid to hear the Echo of his own Thoughts, "whether ſhe would "now have Anything to ſay to "me?"

I ſaid, looking away from him, "Such Queſtions as that ſhould "only be put to the Parties con- "cerned."

"You are right," ſaid he; and ſat a long While ſilent, leaning his Head upon his Hand. At length, he

he ſaid, "I am rich now, and ſhe "is poor, *Cherry*."

I ſaid, "Riches and Poverty "don't make much Difference, "*Mark*, when People really love "one another."

"As I have loved—" ſaid he.

I ſaid, "It is Bed-time now, "and here is *Dolly* coming in to "Prayers."

The next Morning, he ſaid he muſt go to the *Lord Mayor* about his Houſe. For the abandoned Effects of ſuch Families as were entirely ſwept away and left no known Heirs, went to the *King*, who made them over to the *Lord Mayor* and *Aldermen*, to be applied to the Uſe of the Poor; and *Mark's* Abſence had made it appear that his Property was in that Caſe.

Soon after he was gone, the uncommon, and, I may almoſt ſay, unparalleled

unparalleled Event occurred to me of receiving a Letter; I was ſo ſurpriſed at the Circumſtance, that for the Moment I thought it muſt be *from my Father;* or, at leaſt, to tell me he was alive. But no, it was from Maſter *Blower;* and this was what he put in it.

"*Bucklands Hall, Berks.*
"*Oct.* 27, 1665.

"Dear Miſtreſs *Cherry,*

"On firſt coming "down here, I was ſo ill at Eaſe "and out of Sorts, as to require "much Care and Nurſing. Heaven "be praiſed, I am now well, and "I hope you are the ſame. Though "the Pinks and Gilly-flowers are "pretty well over, there are ſtill "ſome gay Autumn Flowers in the "old Garden with the Iron Gate; "and my Brother, the Squire, and "his

"his good Wife want to ſee the "brave Miſtreſs *Cherry* who nurſed "me through the Plague. So come "down to us, dear *Cherry*, to-"morrow if you can. *John*, the "Coachman, (a ſteady Man,) will "be at your Door, with a white "Horſe and a Pillion at Seven o' "the Clock. And be ſo good, if "it will not be inconvenient to "you, as to bring my Siſter-in-Law "a little Mace and green Ginger; "and alſo (on my Account) one of "thoſe Saffron-cakes they uſed to "be ſo famous for at the Bridge-"foot.

"Your faithful and obliged Friend,
NATHANAEL BLOWER.

"If you don't come, you muſt "write."

Here was an Event! An Invitation to the Country was a ſtill more

ſtartling Occurrence than the Receipt of a Letter. Many of the Circumſtances connected with it were delightful; but then, it ſeemed ſo ſtrange, ſo awful, to go to ſtay with People I had never ſeen, . . . ſuch grand People, too! I that was ſo unuſed to fine Company, and did not know how to behave!—And Maſter *Blower* knew all this, knew exactly what I was, and yet had prevailed with them to ſay they ſhould be happy to ſee me!—Oh, his Goodneſs of Heart had this Time carried him too far! They had ſaid ſo juſt to pleaſe him, without expecting I ſhould go!—And yet, if the Lady were *very* much put to it for Mace and green Ginger . . . And if Maſter *Blower's* Heart were very much ſet upon giving her the Saffron-cake . . . I ſuppoſed I had better go. If I found

found myſelf very much out of Place, I could come away the next Day.

Then I thought I would go and conſult *Violet*; for, in Fact, I wanted a little perſuading to do what I very much liked. So I ſtepped acroſs the Bridge. The Shop was open, but Nobody was in it; ſo I went to the Parlour Door, and opened it.

Directly I had done ſo, I ſaw *Violet* and *Mark*, ſitting cloſe together, their Backs to me, and his Arm round her Waiſt. I cloſed the Door ſo ſoftly that they did not know it had been opened, and went Home. A Pang ſhot through my Heart. It was entirely on their own Accounts, for I had ceaſed, for Years, to have Anything but a moſt ſiſterly Concern in him; and his Character, compared with thoſe of the

the People I had moſt loved, failed to ſtand the Teſt: but I thought this was too quick, too ſudden, to be quite comely or decent; there was too much Paſſion, too little Self-reſpect.

I now made up my Mind without any more Heſitation, that I would go into the Country. I gave my parting Directions to *Dolly*, and deſired her to let *Mark* have Things comfortable. Then I made up my little Travelling-equipage, not forgetting my Commiſſions. Being in freſh, well-made Mourning, there was no Trouble or Anxiety about Dreſs. I quite enjoyed the pleaſing Buſtle of Preparation, though I did not expect to be abſent longer than a Week.

Mark was not very punctual to the Supper-hour; and as he ſaid Nothing of his Viſit over the Way, I was

I was to conclude him all Day at my *Lord Mayor's* or in *Cheapſide*. But the deep Carmine of his Cheek and the burning Light of his Eye, told Tales. I aſked him if he had dined. He careleſſly replied yes, with a Friend. I aſked him if he had ſeen the *Lord Mayor*. He ſaid yes, it had been a more troubleſome Buſineſs than he expected: they had aſked him ſo many ſearching Queſtions, and had got the whole Story out of him. He feared he had cut a ſorry Figure. At any Rate, he had in his own Sight. Then I aſked him whether he had got back his Houſe. He ſaid yes, and had put an old Woman into it, who had undertaken to fumigate it. Everything ſeemed ſealed up, but he could not help fearing many Things were gone. The old Place looked ſo diſmal, he came away as ſoon as he could.

After

After a Pauſe, he ſaid, "*Cherry*, "I feel a ſtrong Inclination to get "rid of that Concern altogether. "The Situation is capital, and I "ſhall get Something for the Buſi- "neſs; but I have a great Mind "to ſet up ſomewhere elſe; and "though your Father's was a much "ſmaller Buſineſs than ours, yet "my happieſt Hours have been "paſſed under this Roof; and if "you like to give up the Shop to "me, I will give for it whatever "I get for my own. And you can "ſtill live with us. . . I mean, we "can ſtill live here together. What "ſay you, *Cherry?*"

I ſaid, "Dear *Mark*, I have no "Wiſh to receive for theſe Premiſes "what you get for your own. The "Shop you are welcome to; the "Buſineſs you will have to remake "for yourſelf, for it has dwindled "quite

"quite away; I ſhall be very glad "to continue to live with you as "long as you like to have me."

"We . . . I ſhall *always* like to "have you, *Cherry*," ſaid he, "for "there is only one Perſon dearer to "me in the whole World."

"My Father has left me ſo com- "fortably provided," ſaid I, "that "I ſhall never need to be a Burthen "on any one."

"I am glad of it for your own "Sake," returned he; "but, as to "my taking up the Buſineſs without "paying for it, that is not to be "thought of. Whatever I get for "mine, you ſhall have for yours."

"So let it ſtand at preſent, at "any Rate," ſaid I. "Hence- "forth, the Shop is yours. And, "*Mark*, you will have the whole "Houſe to yourſelf to-morrow, for "I am going into the Country."

"Where?"

"Where?" ſaid he, opening his Eyes very wide.

"To *Bucklands Hall*, in *Berkſhire*; "to ſtay with Maſter . . . with "Squire and Miſtreſs *Blower*."

A broad Smile ſpread over his Face. "I am very glad indeed "to hear of it, *Cherry*," ſaid he.— "*Very* glad of it."

Afterwards, as we ſat chatting over our Supper, we got on the Subject of Ghoſts. He aſked me if I believed in them. I ſaid no.

"Well, I do," ſaid he ſighing. And told me of a Story he had had from the Servant of Sir *Richard Hart*, who, travelling with his Maſter, had been ſummoned by him early one Morning, and charged to ride Home with all Speed, a Diſtance of ſeventeen Miles, and ſee how fared his Daughter, whom he conceited to have ſeen in the Night,

Night, ſtanding at his Bed-foot, with her Hand preſſed to her Head. The Man rode back as he was told; and returned with the News that the young Lady had indeed been taken ill about four o'Clock that Morning, but had had a Doctor with her, and was now pretty well again. However, in the Courſe of the Day ſhe died.

I ſaid, "Her Father, in a Dream, "may have had ſo ſtrong an Im- "preſſion he was waking, that to "him it had all the Effect of being "awake."

"But ſuch a Dream as ſhould "ſo raiſe the Dead, or pre-figure "their Death, *Cherry*," ſaid *Mark*, "would be as bad as if they *were* "raiſed—to *us* . . . I think I, for "one, could not ſtand it." And I ſaw then why he was afraid to return to his own Houſe.

We

We talked the Matter quietly over for ſome Time; and I aſked him why, if the Courſe taken by Divine Providence in the Adminiſtration of human Affairs ever admitted of the Re-appearance of the Dead, the recorded Caſes of ſuch ſuppoſed Appearances ſhould only be to frighten ſome timid Perſon, reſtore a Bag of Gold, or acquaint ſome one with what they would otherwiſe know a few Hours after. This appeared to ſtrike him; but he ſaid it might be for the Sake of Warning. I ſaid, If for Warning, why not for Comfort? How glad ſhould I have been, for Inſtance, to be informed ſupernaturally that all was well with my Father? He ſaid, not *that* Way, ſurely. I replied yes, that Way or any Way that it had pleaſed the ALMIGHTY to vouchſafe me ſuch Knowledge.

Knowledge. I ſhould not be afraid (and there was an Intenſity of Earneſtneſs in me as I ſaid it) to ſee either him or my Mother, either in or out of the Body.

"Well," muttered he, half under his Breath, "I wiſh I could feel as "much with regard to my Wife." And, regarding me with ſome Earneſtneſs, added, "You're a bold "little Thing, *Cherry!*"

As I wiſhed him good Night, he ſtayed me for a Moment, and ſaid, with all his old Frankneſs and Truſt, "*Violet* and I have "made Things out between us, "*Cherry*."

I ſaid fervently, "Then, may "you both be happy. My Belief "is, that ſhe is likelier to make "you happy now, than ſhe was "before."

"Not quite ſo pretty, though," ſaid

ſaid he, rather regretfully. "How-
"ever, I don't mind that. —
"For, you ſee, *Cherry*, *I love*
"*her!*"

CHAP. XIV.

Riding a Pillion.

Dolly and I had ſpent great Part of the Afternoon in bruſhing up and cleaning an old black riding Skirt of my Mother's, which it was a Wonder I had not cut up into Garments for the Poor. When we had cleaned it with Hollands, and ironed it nicely, it looked very well; for our Houſe was ſo airy, that our Clothes never had the Moth.

Preciſely at the Hour named, an old Man in purple Livery rode up to the Door, on a grey Horſe with a Pillion. *Mark*, who was very lively

lively this Morning, told me he thought the Horſe looked like a Bolter; but I knew he was only laughing at me. Then he aſked me how I meant to mount; I ſaid, with a Chair, to be ſure. He ſaid, "Nonſenſe!" and lifted me up in a Moment, and arranged my Riding-ſkirt as nicely as if he had been a Lady's Groom. Then he told the old Man to be careful of me; but the old Coachman proved to be both dull and deaf, by reaſon of great Age; ſo *Mark* whiſpered me that he was not afraid of his running away with me, if the Horſe did not; finiſhing with "Good bye, "*Miſtreſs Blower*."

I gave him an indignant Look, and ſaid, "For ſhame, *Mark!* I "have not deſerved that!"

"Well," ſaid he, "*I* think you "*have*." And juſt then the old Man

Man jerked the Rein of the old Horſe, which moved off ſo ſuddenly, that I was fain to catch hold of the old Man's Coat; and the laſt Glance I had of *Mark* was a merry one.

At firſt I felt a little bit frightened; but ſoon got uſed to my new Poſition; eſpecially as the Horſe walked till we were off the Stones. Still we ſeemed a long while getting out of *London;* and we met a great many People returning to it, in Carts, Waggons, and Coaches.

At length we got quite out of Town, and between green Hedges, with Trees beyond them that were turning all manner of Colours; with only a Houſe here and there, or a Wayſide Inn. At one of the latter we ſtopped in the middle of the Day, to reſt the Horſe, and take ſome Refreſhment. Then we continued

tinued our Journey, which laſted till Sunſet, and the latter Part of which was mighty pleaſant and delightſome; only I was beginning to be a little weary with ſo much ſhaking. But, when I ſaw how charming a Place the Country was, I wondered how People could live in Towns . . . unleſs on a Bridge.

At length we turned off the Highway into a Bye-road, ſhaded with tall Trees, which, after a Mile or two, brought us to a ſtraggling Village; and, ſays the Coachman, "Miſtreſs, now we's in *Bucklands*." Preſently we paſſed the abſoluteſt Curioſity of a little old Church! . . it ſeemed hardly bigger than a Nutmeg-grater!—and hard by it, the old Parſonage, with three Stone Peaks in front, and a great Pear-tree before the Door.

Then we came to a Village Green,

Green, with a Clump of large Trees in the Midſt, that had Seats round them, whereon ſat old Men, while young Men played Cricket, and little Boys were ſetting a Puppy to bark at ſome white Geeſe. Here we came to a great Iron Gate, at which ſtood a hale, hearty-looking Gentleman about fifty; ſquare-built, and not over-tall; with a good-humoured, red, mottled Face. And, ſays he, coming up to me, as we ſtopped, "Miſtreſs *Cherry*, I'm "Squire *Blower*. I can gueſs who "you are, though my Brother did "not tell me you were ſuch a pretty "Girl.—Oh, the Sinner!" And lifted me off the Horſe.

"Well," ſays he, "you don't "look quite ſure that I's I . . . I *am*, "though! Certainly, not much "like *Nat*, who was always the "Beauty of the Family. Ah! now

" you laugh, which was juſt what " I wanted. My Brother ſaid your " ſilver Laugh ſaved his Life;—do " you know what he meant by " that?"

We were now walking up a ſtrait gravel Walk, between clipped Hedges, to an old red-brick Houſe, with ſtone Facings. " I ſuppoſe, " Sir," ſaid I, after thinking a little, " he meant that my Laughing was " as good as Silver to him, becauſe " it ſaved him the Doctor."

" That was it, no Doubt," returns he, " juſt ſuch an Anſwer, Miſtreſs " *Cherry*, as I expected. I ſee we " ſhall get on very well together, " though *Nat* is not here to help " the Acquaintance.—He has gone " to ſee his old Foſter-mother, who " is dying. People *will* die, you " know, when they get to eighty or " ninety."

We

We were now going up a Flight of ſhallow Steps, with Stone Balluſters, which led us into a Hall, paved with great Diamonds of black and white Marble, and hung about with Guns, Fiſhing-rods, and Stag's Horns. An Almanack and King *Charles's* golden Rules were paſted againſt the Wall; and a ſtuffed Otter in a Glaſs Caſe hung over the great Fire-place, where a Wood-fire burned on the Hearth.

Before this Wood-fire was ſpread a ſmall *Turkey* Carpet; and on the Carpet ſtood a Table and four heavy Chairs; in one of which ſat an old Lady knitting. The Squire bluntly accoſted her with "Mother, "here's Miſtreſs *Cherry;*" on which ſhe ſaid, "Ho!"—laid down her Knitting, and looked hard at me; firſt over, and then through her Spectacles.

"Hum!"

"Hum!" ſays ſhe, "Miſtreſs "*Cherry*, you are welcome. A "good Day to you. Pray make "yourſelf at Home, and be ſeated."

So I ſat down over againſt her, and we looked at each other very ſtiff. She was ſhort and fat, with round blue Eyes, and a roſy Complexion; and had a ſharper, ſhrewder Look than the Squire.

"I dare ſay ſhe's hungry, "Mother," ſays the Squire; "give "her a Piece of Gingerbread or "Something.—How ſoon ſhall we "have Supper?"

"You are always in ſuch a Hurry "Father, to be eating;" ſays his Lady. "Forſooth, are we not to "wait for your Brother?"

And without waiting for his Anſwer, ſhe took a Bunch of Keys from her Apron-ſtring, and unlocked a little Corner-cupboard, from

from which ſhe brought me a Slice of rich Seed-cake, and a large Glaſs of Wine.

"Thank you, Madam; I am not "hungry," ſaid I.

"Pooh! Child, you muſt be;" returns ſhe, rather authoritatively. "Never be afraid of eating and "drinking before Company, as if "it were a Crime!"

So, thus admoniſhed, I ate and drank: though I would as lief have waited a little.

"Are you ſtiff with your Ride?" ſays ſhe.

"A little, Madam," ſaid I; "for "I was ne'er on a Horſe before."

"Is it poſſible?" cries ſhe, burſting out a-laughing, "Father, did "you hear that?"

"Famous!" ſaid he; and they eyed me as if I were a Curioſity.

"Do you know, now," ſays the Squire's

Squire's Lady to me, after a While, "I never was in *Lunnon!*"

"That ſeems as ſtrange to me, "Madam," ſaid I, "as it ſeems to "you that I ſhould never have been "on Horſeback."

"It *is* ſtrange," ſays ſhe. "Both "are ſtrange."

"And now *I'll* tell you Some- "thing that is ſtrange," ſays the Squire, "ſince we all ſeem ſur- "priſing one another. Do you "know, Miſtreſs *Cherry*," ſtepping up behind his Wife, and laying a Hand on each of her Shoulders, while he ſpoke to me over her Head; "that this little round-about "Woman was once as pretty a Girl "as you are?"

"Stuff! Squire," ſays his Lady.

"Fact!" perſiſted he. "Nay, "prettier!"

"Not a Word of Truth in it," ſays

ſays ſhe, ſhaking him off. "I was "all very well,—Nothing more. "Come, Father, here's *Gatty* going "to ſpread the Cloth for Supper, "which you'll be glad of. But, "*Gatty*, in the firſt Place, ſhew "Miſtreſs *Cherry* to her Chamber, ". . ſhe will perhaps like to dreſs a "little. You'll excuſe my attending "you, my Dear; the Stairs try my "Breath."

I followed *Gatty* up-ſtairs to the prettieſt Room that ever was! When I came down, the Cloth was ſpread, and the Squire's Lady ſigned me to the Chair over againſt her, and was juſt going to ſay Something, when, croſſing between me and the Sun, I ſaw the Shadow of a Man againſt the Wall, and knew it for Maſter *Blower's*. Ah! what came over me at that Moment, to make me ſo ſtupid, I know not.—

Perhaps

Perhaps that ſaucy Saying of *Mark's* . . but whatever it was, inſtead of my going up to Maſter *Blower*, when he came in, which he did the next Moment, and aſking him, ſimply and ſtraitforwardly, how he was, I muſt needs colour all over like a Gooſe, and wait till he came quite up to me, without having a Word to ſay for myſelf.

"Ah, *Cherry!*" ſays he, taking my Hand quite frankly, "how glad "I am to ſee you! Are you quite "well?"

And, the Moment I heard his pleaſant Voice, I was quite comfortable again, and felt myſelf at Home for the firſt Time.

"Quite, thank you, Sir," ſaid I, "and I hope you are better than "you were."

"Well, now that civil Things "have paſſed on both Sides," ſaid the

the Squire, who had already ſeated himſelf, "come and ſay Grace, "*Nat*, for here's a Couple of "beautiful Fowls getting cold."

—Well, the Supper was as pleaſant as could be, and it was growing quite duſk before the Table was cleared, yet the Squire would not hear of having Candles; ſo then his Lady deſired *Gatty* to carry Lights into the green Parlour, "Where," ſays ſhe, "I and this "young Perſon will retire, and be "good enough Company for each "other, I dare ſay."

Oh, I'm a young Perſon, am I? thought I. So I followed her into the green Parlour, where ſhe ſettled herſelf in an eaſy Chair, with her Feet on a Footſtool, and made me ſit facing her. "Now," ſays ſhe, "the Men can proſe by themſelves, "and we'll have a Coze by *our-* "ſelves.

" ſelves. Pray, Child, how was it " you came to think of nurſing my " Brother?"

So I began to tell her how I went to him in Hope of his telling me how to find my Father; but then, ſhe wanted to know how my Father came to be miſſing, ſo I had to go further back. And then I could not help putting in by the Way how good and excellent a Man he was, how tender a Father, how loving a Huſband, which brought in my Mother. But I checked myſelf, and begged the Lady's Pardon for entering on that, which I knew could no Ways intereſt her.—" Nay, let me hear it " all," ſays ſhe, " I ſhall like to " hear Something about your " Mother." So then I told her of her holy Life, and ſaintlike End; and of Maſter *Blower's* invaluable Miniſtrations,

Miniſtrations, which of courſe intereſted her a good deal; and indeed I ſaw a Tear ſteal down her Cheek, while I kept mine down as well as I could. Then I went on to the Plague, and my Father's Heavineſs of Spirits; and his going forth and never coming back, and my going in queſt of him, and all the Events of that terrible Day, which I could not go over without crying very heartily. She wept too; yet cried, "Go on, go on!" So then I got to Maſter *Blower*, and the ſleeping Watchman, and my getting into the Houſe, and going from Room to Room, and hearing him yawn,—which made her laugh; though ſhe cried again when ſhe heard of his praying, and of his Sufferings that fearful Night and many Days after. At the End of all, ſhe got up, put her Arms about my Neck, and kiſſed

kiſſed me. "*Cherry*," ſays ſhe, "you're an excellent Creature!"—Juſt then, a great Bell began to ring,—"That's the Prayer-bell!" ſays ſhe, "We will return to the "Hall, my Dear."

So we returned to the Hall, much more at our Eaſe together than when we left it. And there, ſtanding in a Row, were half a Dozen Men and Women Servants, and the Table had Candles and a large Bible on it. Maſter *Blower* read, and then prayed: had I not been ſo tired, I could have wiſhed him to go on all Night! Then we diſperſed to our ſeveral Chambers; and I had ſo much to think about that it ſeemed as though I ſhould never get to ſleep: however, I did at laſt.

CHAP. XV.

The Squire's Garden.

BEFORE I went to Bed, I peeped out of my Window, and ſaw the full Moon ſhining over the broad gravel Walks and Fiſh-ponds; and I thought how much I ſhould like to go round the Garden before Breakfaſt. However, when I woke in the Morning, I feared I had been overſleeping myſelf, ſo dreſſed in a great Hurry, and went down Stairs. There I found two Maids flooding the great Hall with Pails of Water, and they told me we were to breakfaſt in the green Parlour,

Parlour, but not for an Hour yet. So I ſtrayed out into the Garden, where were ſtill a good many Flowers, though the Seaſon was ſo late, backed by Evergreen Hedges, and Rows of tall Trees that were turning yellow and ſcarlet; and it ſeemed to me juſt like the Garden of *Eden*.

So I went on and on, thinking it mighty pleaſant, and wondering what might be the Names of ſome of the Flowers; and at length I came to a Bowling-green, of wonderful fine Turf, between high Horn-beam Hedges; and having a Sun-dial at one End, and a little brick Summer-houſe faced with Stone at the other. Into the Summer-houſe I went; and there, with all his Books and Papers about him, ſat Maſter *Blower* writing.

"Ah, *Cherry!*" ſays he, holding out

out his Hand, "ſo you've found "out my Snuggery! Have they "ſent you to ſummon me to Break-"faſt?"

"No, Sir," ſaid I, "I did not "know you were here." And turned away.

"Stop a Minute," ſays he, haſtily putting up his Papers, "and we "will take a Turn together round "this wonderful Garden. The "Garden of your *Dream*, *Cherry*."

I ſaid how very odd it was I ſhould have dreamed about it,—the Garden of my Dream being ſo exactly like the Reality.

"Why, you ſimple Girl," ſays he, laughing; "becauſe I muſt "have deſcribed it to you before, "though you and I had forgotten "it!"

I felt quite ſure in my own Mind that he had not.

"Well,"

"Well," ſays he, ſetting out with me along the Bowling-green, "what's the News, *Cherry?* The "Plague, you ſay, is abating, but "not gone. Have you ſeen or "heard Anything of my poor "People?"

I ſaid yes. Miſtreſs *Peach* had come to me on my ſending for her the Evening before I left; and had told me how Things were going on.

"And how *are* they going on?" ſaid he.

"Well, Sir, it would be a poor "Compliment to you, if they were "going on as well in your Abſence, "as in your Preſence."

"That's true," ſays he, looking grave, "but, for Particulars."

"Many Perſons in Trouble of one "kind or another, knock at your "Door; and when they find they "cannot

"cannot ſee you, go away in "Tears."

"Poor Souls!" ſaid he, much moved, "I will return to them "ſhortly. I think I am almoſt "well enough now, *Cherry*. They "think I am neglecting them?"

"No, Sir, they are very ſorry "you need recruiting; but they are "ſorry for themſelves too."

"It's a very nice Point," ſays he muſingly, "when we ought to lie "by. I believe, had I not left "Town when I did, I might have "been dead now—and yet, perhaps "I was like a Soldier deſerting his "Poſt."

I ſaid, "No, Sir, you were liker "to a Soldier carried off the Battle-"field to the Hoſpital."

"Thank you, *Cherry*," ſays he, taking my Hand and drawing it under his Arm. We had now

reached the End of the Bowling-green; but inſtead of turning into the Garden, we continued walking up and down.

"And what elſe?" ſays he. "Come, let me hear all."

"Well, Sir," ſaid I, "there's not "much more to tell—"

"Something, though, I can ſee!" ſaid he. "Come! out with it, "*Cherry!*"

"Sir," ſaid I, "it's of no Uſe "for us to trouble and vex our-"ſelves about what wicked People "will ſay of us in mere wantonneſs."

"Sometimes, though, we may "hear the Truth from an Enemy," ſays he. "And what do wicked, "wanton People ſay of me?"

"Why, Sir,—ſome very evil-"minded, malapert Perſon hath "writ on your Church-door, 'A "Pulpit to Let!'"

"The

"The Raſcal!" ſaid he haſtily, and colouring very red. "Why "now, did I not keep on, Sabbaths "and Week-days, till the Plague-"ſwellings were actually in my "Throat, though my Congregation "often conſiſted of only two or "three old Women? Is not this "enough to provoke a Man, "*Cherry?*"

I ſaid, "Yes, Sir,—only there's "no Uſe in being provoked."

"None, none," ſays he, much perturbed,—"GOD forgive me for "it!—I can hardly have Patience, "though, with them."

I ſaid, "Dear Sir, you muſt "have Nothing *but* Patience with "them."

"You are right, you are right," ſays he, cooling, but ſtill much moved. "Ill or well, I muſt go "back to them forthwith . . the "Fact

" Fact is, there is a Matter I would " gladly have ſettled here, a little " at my Leiſure.—But, Duty before " all! So, I'll go back, *Cherry*, to " mine."

I ſmiled a little as I ſaid, " Some- " body has been doing Duty for " you, the laſt Week or ten Days, " Sir."

" Who?" cried he.

I ſaid, " An Independent Mini- " ſter."

A complex Kind of Expreſſion croſſed his Face; for a Moment he looked pained and provoked, and then burſt out a-laughing.

" God bleſs the worthy Fellow!" cries he, " I'll do him a good Turn " if I can, the firſt Time he'll let " me! 'The good Lord accept " every one that prepareth his Heart " to ſeek God, the Lord God of " his Fathers, even though he be " not

" not cleanſed according to the " Purification of the Sanctuary!'— " Well, *Cherry*, I muſt go! and " that forthwith,—I would fain have " tarried here while your Viſit " laſted."

I looked quite blank at the Idea of being left behind; and ſaid, " Muſt I, then, ſtay?"

" Why," cried he, " what is to " prevent you? Your Viſit is not " to *me*, *Cherry!*"

I ſaid, " Oh, Sir, but . . " and ſtopped, for I did not know whether it were right to ſay I ſhould feel ſo lonely without him. But the Tears came into my Eyes.

" I hope," ſays he, in his kindeſt Way, " you will ſtay and have a very " pleaſant Viſit."

I ſaid, " It won't,—it can't be " pleaſant now."

" *Cherry*," he ſaid, yet more affectionately,

affectionately, "we ſhall ſoon meet "again . . you ſhake your Head.— "Well, our Lives are not in our "own keeping, certainly, and may "be called in the next Minute, "here as well as in *London*. And I "ſhould not like to die away from "my Poſt. But, *Cherry*, ſince you "are inexpreſſibly dear to me, and "I think I am, in a leſs Degree, "dear to you, why, when we meet "next, ſhould we ever part again? "—Nay, hear me, *Cherry!* for I "have long meant to ſay this, "though not quite ſo ſoon . . I "thought it would ſeem ſo abrupt; "I wanted to bring you to it by "Degrees, leſt I ſhould get an "Anſwer I did not like. For, in- "deed, *Cherry*, I know how much "too old I am for you, how "thoroughly unworthy of you."

I could not ſtand this, and cried, "Oh,

" Oh, how *can* you ſay ſuch Things,
" Sir! Unworthy of *me*, indeed!
" when any Woman—"

Might be proud to have you, was my Thought, but I did not ſay it.

" *Cherry*," ſays he, " there was
" never—." And juſt at that Moment a Man ſhouted, " High!" at the Top of his Voice, and then, " Break-faſt!"

" We're keeping them waiting," ſaid I, ſlipping my Hand from his Arm, " and you've left your Papers
" all blowing about in the Summer-
" houſe." And ſo, ran off to the Houſe.

Fain would I not have gone ſtraight to Breakfaſt, but there was no Help for it; and the Squire kept loading my Plate, and yet ſaying I ate Nothing. He and his Lady were wondrous ſorry to hear Maſter *Blower*

Blower ſay he muſt return to Town the next Day; and looked rather aſkance at me for having brought down any Tidings that ſhould ſummon him thither. After Breakfaſt, however, he took his Brother aſide to explain to him how needful was his Return to his Pariſh; and Miſtreſs *Blower*, bringing forth an immenſe Quantity of Patchwork of very intricate Contrivance, ſaid, "Now, you and I will do a good "Morning's Work:"—and told me it was a Fancy of hers to furniſh a little Bed-chamber with Patchery, lined with Pink, and fringed with White. However, Maſter *Blower* put a Check to all this, as far as my Help went, by coming in and ſaying that as this was to be his laſt Day in the Country, he wanted to take a long Walk with me, and ſhew me the fineſt View in the County.

County. Miſtreſs *Blower* made one or two Objections, which he ſummarily over-ruled; ſo, in a very few Minutes, off we were walking together. And firſt, without any Reference to what had been ſaid before Breakfaſt, he took me round the Village Green, and into the Church and Churchyard; and made me look over the Parſonage Gate. I ſaid, "Dear me, if I were you, "Sir, how much ſooner I would "be Parſon here than in *White-*"*chapel!*"

"Would you?" cries he. "Oh, "but this is a very poor Living!"

I ſaid, "I did not know you cared "much for Money."

"Well," he ſaid, "not to ſpend "on myſelf, but as a Means of Uſe-"fulneſs. And, oh *Cherry!* there is "ſo much Wretchedneſs in *London*, "that one cannot, after all, relieve!

—"I'll

—"I'll tell you what I do," continues he, turning down a green Lane with me, "as a general Rule "I give away half. That was "*Zaccheus*' Meaſure, you know. "But, as a ſingle Man, I have found "the other Half a great deal too "much for me, ſo I give away all "I can of it in Caſualties . . juſt to "pleaſe myſelf, as it were. But I "don't conſider this Sub-diviſion "imperative; therefore, when you "and I commence Houſekeeping "together, which I hope will be in "a *very* little While, we will ſpend "the full Half. Will that ſuffice "you?"

"No indeed, Sir," ſaid I, "I "ſhall be very ſorry indeed if I add "to your Expenſes ſo much as that. "I would rather give the Poor "another Mouthful than deprive "them of one; and as I ſhall only

"coſt

" coſt you juſt what I eat and wear,
" I hope it won't make much
" Difference."

" You're a comical Girl," ſays he.
" But, *Cherry*, I'm ſorry to ſay, that
" rambling old Houſe of mine is
" now ſo completely out of Repair,
" as to be unfit for a Lady's Occu-
" pation. We muſt paint it and
" point it, and mend the Roof."

" Well, but," ſaid I, " my Father
" has left me ſix hundred Pounds,
" which will do all that very well."

" Six hundred Pounds!" ſays he, opening his Eyes very wide, and then laughing. " Why, you've a
" Fortune, *Cherry!* How could the
" dear, good Man have ſaved it? I
" thought his Buſineſs ſeemed quite
" dwindled away."

" He had ſome Money with my
" Mother, Sir," ſaid I. " And an
" Uncle left him a Legacy. Beſides
" this

" this Money, which Maſter *Benſkin*
" and Maſter *Braidfoot* pay Intereſt
" for, the Houſe is mine for a long
" Term; and *Mark* means to buy
" the Buſineſs; ſo that I hope I
" ſhall not be very expenſive to
" you."

" Well," ſays he, " it will be for
" After-conſideration whether we
" repair the Parſonage at once or
" not. All ſhall be as you wiſh it,
" *Cherry*." And then we went on talking of this and that till we came to a Seat under a Tree; and there we ſat and talked all the Reſt of the Morning; for we did not care much for going on to ſee the Proſpect.

After Dinner, it became Maſter *Blower's* Object to perſuade me to name a very early Day indeed—even that Day Week; and, though I could hardly endure to think of ſo ſudden

ſudden a Change, and thought it would ſeem ſo ſtrange and ſo unwomanly to Everybody, yet the main Thing that wrought upon me was what I kept to myſelf; namely, the Danger he was going to incur in returning to his Duties before the Infection was over. And I thought how I ſhould reproach myſelf if he fell ill, and died for want of my Nurſing. But then, again, it would ſeem ſo outrageous to the Squire and his Lady. . . Not at all, he ſaid, they knew all about his wanting to marry me before ever they ſent for me, and the Squire's Lady had at firſt been very cool about it; but before we parted at Night, I had quite won her over; and ſhe ſaid to him when the Door cloſed upon me, "Well, *Nat*, you "may marry that Girl as ſoon as "you like."

I could

I could hardly help laughing—What was I to do? I ſaid, oh, very well, I ſuppoſed they muſt all have their own Way,—I would try to be not very miſerable about it. So, when we went in to Supper, Maſter *Blower* made no Secret of what we had been talking about; and Miſtreſs *Blower* kiſſed me, and ſo did the Squire, and we had a wonderful pleaſant Supper. When Maſter *Blower* was taking leave of me, he aſked me if I had any Meſſage to ſend Home. It then ſtruck me I muſt ſend Word to *Mark* and *Dolly* how ſoon my Condition was going to be changed,—but, what could I ſay?—I had ſcarce written a Letter in my Life; leaſt of all to *Mark;* and could not for the Life of me think of any Way of telling him the News, ſufficiently round-about to prevent its ſeeming abrupt

abrupt after all. So, thought I, leaſt ſaid, ſooneſt mended: and, ſitting down to Pen, Ink, and Paper, I wrote in my ſmalleſt, neateſt Hand,—

"Dear *Mark*,

"I'm going to be Miſtreſs "*Blower*."

And ſealed it up and directed it. Maſter *Blower* ſaid, "Short, if not "ſweet!" and promiſed it ſhould be faithfully delivered.

When he was gone, the Patch-work was put away, and the Wedding-dreſſes were diſcuſſed. Dear Miſtreſs *Blower* was as kind as a Mother to me, though her Huſband was only five Years older than mine. Indeed ſhe and the Squire looked upon me quite as a Girl, though I told them over and over again

again I was not. Though they called each other Father and Mother, they had never had but one Child, which died at three Years old; but I ſuppoſe it was always in their Thoughts.

What a happy Week that was! —though Maſter *Blower* was away. On the Whole, his Abſence was a good Thing: it gave me Time to ſteady a little, and feel that it was not a Dream that I was going to live always within the Sound of his dear Voice. And, as there was much Sewing to do, I had Plenty of Time to think of it. Miſtreſs *Blower* gave me my Wedding-clothes,—we had Poſt-horſes to the old Coach, and went to buy them at the County Town. The Gown was white Silk; the Hat trimmed with a Wreath of very little pink Roſes round the Crown; and I had a cherry-

a cherry-colour Habit for travelling. Maſter *Blower* ſaid he did not deſerve ſuch a pretty Bride,—but that was his kind Way of ſpeaking. I only wiſh I were better worth his having!

—We went away from the Church-door,—as happy a Bridegroom and Bride as ever rode a Pillion. When we had got out of Everybody's Sight, my Huſband ſaid, "How are you getting on, "Miſtreſs *Blower?*" I ſaid, "I am "ſmiling ſo that I am quite glad "there's Nobody to ſee me." "May "the Reſt of your Life be all "Smiles and no Tears, *Cherry*," ſays he,—"with GOD's Bleſſing, it "ſhall be ſo if I can make it ſo!" "Ah!" ſaid I, "I'm content to "take the Rough and the Smooth "together, ſince I ſhall henceforth "ſhare them with you, Sir."

"Deareſt *Cherry*," ſays he, "you "really muſt leave off calling me "*Sir!*" "I don't know that I can, "Sir," ſaid I, "but I'll try."

Though the Journey was delightſome, yet towards the latter End of it, every Mile of the Road became leſs and leſs pleaſant, till at length we got into the Tide of People, on Horſe and on Foot, ſetting in towards *London*. Then, how ſtrange it ſeemed to me that I was not going back to the Bridge! where I had lived all the Days of my Life till within the laſt Week! I began to tremble a little; and the Idea of the great old roomy, gloomy Houſe in *Whitechapel*, with no bright, ſparkling Water to look out upon, became rather oppreſſive to me, till I thought how Maſter *Blower's* continual Preſence would light it up. The Streets now becoming thronged,

thronged, he preſſed my Arm tighter to him and bade me hold on cloſe; and I felt he was all the World to me, be the Houſe what it would. But when we reached it, what a Difference! The whole Front had had a freſh Coat of Paint, which made it wondrous lightſome and cheerful, the Door-ſtep was freſh whitened, the Door freſh varniſhed, the Knocker freſh poliſhed, and Miſtreſs *Peach* ſtanding on the Step with a new Cap plaited cloſe round her ſweet, pleaſant Face, and dreſſed in a new graſs-green Gown. I could not help kiſſing her as I ran in; ſhe ſaid, "God bleſs you, "Miſtreſs!" with hearty Cordiality, and followed me from Room to Room. Everything had been cleaned up, and ſhe told me, laughing, that though ſhe had had Plenty of Helps, it had been the hardeſt Week's

Week's Work ſhe had ever had in her Life. The old green Bed-furniture had given Place to new white Dimity; there was a Lady's Pincuſhion on the Toilette, with "May you be happy!" in minikin Pins; and a Beau-pot of Flowers on the Window-ſeat. "All that "is Miſtreſs *Violet's* doing," ſaid *Dorcas*, "ſhe has not left the Houſe "half an Hour, I aſſure you, and "her Needle went in and out as "faſt as could be when ſhe was "finiſhing the laſt Muſlin Blind. "Oh, ſhe has been very buſy, has "Miſtreſs *Violet!* 'Twas ſhe ſet "out the Supper Table with the "Flowers, and Sweet-meats, and "Pound-cake."

CHAP. XVI.

The Burning City.

NEXT Day, the Holiday of Life was over, its Duties re-commenced. Maſter *Blower* had an Accumulation of Buſineſs to attend to, and I had Plenty to do about the Houſe. Before the End of the Week, I was immerſed in Cares that were Pleaſures to me, inaſmuch as they lightened his own. But I could not reſiſt paying a Viſit to the Bridge, and ſpending an Hour in the dear old Houſe, and another, afterwards, with *Violet*. She and *Mark* came to ſup with us. I found they were not

not going to marry till ſix Months were out, which was full quick, after all; but I was thankful they would wait ſo long. A Change ſeemed coming over *Mark;* he was ſteady, compoſed, attentive to Buſineſs, and far pleaſanter, whether lively or ſad, than in his earlier Days. As to *Violet*, ſhe was infinitely ſoftened, and the old Spirit of Coquetry ſeemed quite to have burned out. We did not ſee them often, but Maſter *Blower* always received them kindly, and they ſeemed to conſider it a Privilege as well as a Pleaſure to come to us.

Thus, the Winter wore on: the Plague was ſtayed; and though it was common to meet in the Streets Men in their Nightcaps, limping, or with their Throats bound up, no one thought of getting out of their Way, for the Infection had ſpent itſelf.

itſelf. And Perſons that were Strangers to each other might be heard exchanging Congratulations on the improved State of Things, now that Houſes and Shops were re-opening, the Weeds beginning to diſappear from the Thoroughfares, and Men no longer walked along the Middle of the Streets, but on the Foot-pavements.

My dear Huſband endeavoured to impreſs the Hearts and Minds of his People, in Seaſon and out of Seaſon, with a Senſe of the Mercy that had preſerved them; but, I am ſorry to ſay, with very little permanent Effect. True it is, at firſt the Ground was broken up, and the Clods were ſoft, and the good Seed that was caſt in ſeemed likely to fructify; but alas, the hot Sun of worldly Temptation ſoon hardened the Ground and burnt the Seed up, and

and People that had almoſt miraculouſly eſcaped the general Judgment, ſeemed little better than they were before. This depreſſed my dear Huſband very much; but, inſtead of relaxing his Efforts, he only redoubled them; and he ſaid I ſtrengthened his Hands.

There was alſo a great deal of Diſtreſs, owing to the general Stagnation of Trade, and the vaſt Numbers of People thrown out of Employ. So that, though we did all we could, it was heart-rending to witneſs the Miſery in ſome of the lower Diſtricts of our Pariſh. We pinched ourſelves to help them, voluntarily giving up ſuch and ſuch Things at our Table; and this with ſuch Cheerfulneſs that I really believe our Self-privations gave us more actual Enjoyment than if we had ate the Fat and drank the Sweet

Sweet to our Hearts' Deſire. And once or twice it remarkably happened that when we had a little exceeded in this Way, and had ſupplied thereby the Needs of a more than ordinary Number, a great Hamper would arrive from Miſtreſs *Blower*, full of Game, Poultry, Eggs, Butter, Brawn, Hams, Tongues, and Everything that was good. Often we talked over that ſweet Place the Hampers came from; and it ſeemed to me that my Huſband more and more inclined towards the Country; eſpecially as his Throat had never quite recovered the Effects of the Plague, and he found he could not make himſelf heard throughout the remoter Parts of his large Church without Difficulty. Quite at the End of the Summer, the old Incumbent of *Bucklands* Parſonage died; and

and as the Living was in the Squire's Gift, and he had ſome Notion his Brother would like it, he wrote to offer it to him. My Huſband aſked my Mind about it: I ſaid I ſhould like it of all Things, if he could be content with ſo ſmall and quiet a Field of Action. He ſaid, yes, the Time had been when it had been otherwiſe with him, the harder the Work the greater the Pleaſure, eſpecially as carrying ſome Senſe of Glory in the Victory over it; but it was not ſo with him now: he could be content with trying to do good on a ſmall Scale; eſpecially as he had not been quite ſo ſucceſsful on the larger Field of Action as he had hoped and expected.

"Could I preach like *Apollos*," continued he, "to what Good, to "the Half of my Congregation who "cannot catch one Word in ten?

"So

"So that, in Fact, I preach to a "ſmall Congregation already. And "I've no Mind to receive the Pay "without doing the Work. There's "no Fear, *Cherry*, of my not "making myſelf audible in *Buck-* "*lands* Church!—Beſides, do you "know I fancy I have a little "domeſtic Miſſion there. My dear, "good Brother, who has dozed "under Doctor *Bray* for ſo many "Years, has languiſhed under a "ſpiritual Dearth. He is now "getting in Years, and I think I "may do Something for him—you "know he told you he thought my "Sermons were *the real Thing*."

"He ſaid," replied I, "that you "not only hit the right Nail on "the Head, but hammered it well "in."

After ſome further Talk, which only went to prove how completely we

we were of a Mind on the Matter, the Letters were written and ſent—to accept the one Living and reſign the other. That was on the Second of *September*. The ſame Night, broke out that dreadful Fire, which laſted three Days and three Nights, and deſtroyed fifteen of the twenty-ſix City Wards, including four hundred Streets and Lanes, and thirteen thouſand Houſes. Oh, what a dreadful Calamity! We were in Bed, a little after Ten, when Shrieks and Cries of "Fire!" awoke us; and my dear Huſband put his Head forth of the Window and aſked where it was. A Man running along anſwered, "On or "at the Foot of *London Bridge!*" Then our Hearts failed us for *Violet* and *Mark*, and all our old Friends; and we dreſſed and went forth, for I could not be ſtayed from accompanying

panying Maſter *Blower*. But before we could reach the Bridge Foot, we found Acceſs to it cut off, both by Reaſon of the Crowd and of the Flames: the only Comfort was, that the Fire kept off the Bridge. There was ſo much Tumult and Preſſure that we could only keep on the Skirts of the Crowd, where we hung about without doing any Good for ſome Hours.

The next Morning, we were in Hope of hearing the Fire had been got under; inſtead of which, the whole *Bankſide* was wrapped in Flames, and all the Houſes from the Bridge Foot, and all *Thames Street* were lying in Aſhes. The People ſeemed all at Pauſe, gazing on, without ſtirring Hand or Foot, and thoſe that were perſonal Sufferers were venting their Grief in Cries and Lamentations. But we could

could not find that any Life had yet been loſt; and the Fire kept off the Bridge.

When I went Home at Duſk, it was to pray for the poor Sufferers, and then to muſe how far the Calamity might extend. Supper was on Table, but I had no Mind to eat; which was all the better, as my Huſband preſently brought in a poor, weeping Family who had loſt Everything, and had not touched a Morſel all Day. We gave them a good Meal, and Shelter for the Night. They ſlept, but we could not. There was no Need of Candles all that Night, which was as light as Day for ten Miles round. The Fire was now ſpreading all along the South Part of the City, leaping from Houſe to Houſe, and Street to Street, for the very Air ſeemed ignited; Showers of Sparks and Aſhes

Aſhes were falling in every Direction, and the Pavement was growing almoſt too hot to tread upon. My Huſband kept bringing in new Refugees as long as our Houſe would hold them, and I was too buſy caring for them to have Leiſure to go forth, even had it been ſafe; but each New-comer brought freſh Tidings of the Deſolation, which was now extending to Churches, public Monuments, Hoſpitals, Companies' Halls, as though it would carry all before it. We now began to be in ſome Alarm for ourſelves; and to conſider what we ſhould do if it came our Way; and now we experienced the Convenience of having but little Treaſure that Moth, Ruſt, or Fire could injure, for when Maſter *Blower* had made up a ſmall Packet of Papers and ready Money that we could readily carry

carry about us, there was Nothing left for the Deſtroyer to conſume but our poor Furniture and the Houſe over our Heads. Very opportunely, at this Time came to our Door a *Berkſhire* Countryman with one of the good Squire's Hampers full of Eatables. I never ſaw a poor Fellow look ſo ſcared! He got a good View of the Calamity from a Diſtance, and then ſet his Face homewards in as great a Hurry as if the Flames were in Chaſe of him. The Streets were now full of Carts loaded with Moveables, which their Owners were conveying out of Town; giving Way to the Calamity rather than ſeeking to arreſt it, which, indeed, it was now vain to attempt, though I think Something might have been done at firſt. *St. Paul's* was now in a Blaze; the great Stones exploding with

with intenſe Heat, and the melted Lead running along the Gutters. This Night, alſo, we got ſcarce any Reſt.

The next Morning, while I was overlooking my Stores, and conſidering how I ſhould beſt huſband them for my poor Inmates, in comes *Mark*, his Face blackened, his Hair full of Aſhes, his Clothes ſinged in many Places, and his Shoes nearly burnt off his Feet.

"Thank God, you are ſafe, "then!" cries he, catching hold of both my Hands. "The Sky looked "ſo fiery in this Quarter during the "Night, that *Violet* and I were in "dreadful Fear for you, and I ſtarted "at Daybreak, and came here by "making a great Round, to ſee how "it fared with you. And *Violet* "bids me ſay that ſhe has not for-"gotten your Father's and Mother's

"Kindneſs to her Father and "Mother when they were burned "out of Houſe and Home, nor how "ſhe and you were put together in "the ſame Cradle; and it will "make her and me, dear *Cherry*, "unſpeakably happy to receive you "and Maſter *Blower* under the very "ſame Roof, ſhould you be burnt "out of your own."

I ſaid, "Dear *Mark*, that is ſo "like you and *Violet!* Juſt the "Kindneſs I ſhould have expected! "Believe me, we ſhall thankfully "accept it, if there be Need. But "at preſent the Fire is all about us, "yet comes not to us. We have "made up our little Parcel of "Treaſures (a little one, indeed, "*Mark!*) and are ready to ſtart at "a Minute's Notice, truſting to "a good God to ſpare our Lives. "This old Houſe, if it once catches, "will

" will burn like Tinder; mean-
" while, come and ſee how many
" it holds."

So I led him from Room to Room, and ſhewed him Mothers nurſing their Infants, Children eating Bread and Milk, and old People ſtill ſleeping heavily. He was greatly intereſted and impreſſed. " What a good Soul you are!" ſaid he,—" I can give you no Notion of
" the Scenes of Miſery on the Out-
" ſkirts through which I paſſed on
" my Way here. People huddled
" in Tents, or lying under Hedges,
" or on Heaps of Litter and broken
" Furniture, without a Morſel of
" Bread or a Cup of Milk, yet none
" begging! . . I ſaw a few Bread-
" Carts and Milk-people coming
" up to them as I paſſed along, but
" many had no Money, not even
" a Penny, to buy a Breakfaſt. I
" had

" had filled my Purſe, *Cherry*, with " all that was in the Till, before I " ſet out; but you ſee there's not " much in it now—"

And he pulled out an empty Purſe, with a Smile that ſhewed he was well pleaſed with the Way its Contents had gone. Then we ſhook Hands heartily, and parted.

To the loud Crackling of Flames and Craſh of falling Buildings, was now added the blowing up of Houſes with Gunpowder, which, indeed, made the Neighbourhood of them very dangerous to Byſtanders, but checked the Progreſs of the Fire. However, Nothing effectual could have been done, had it not pleaſed ALMIGHTY GOD to ſtay his Judgment by abating the high Wind, which fell all at once; whereby the Flames ceaſed to ſpread, though the glowing Ruins continued to burn.

The

The Criſis being now paſt, we ceaſed to be in Apprehenſion for ourſelves, and devoted all our Attention to the poor, bereft People under our Care. Some of theſe were fetched away by their Country Friends; ſooner or later all diſperſed; and then we went out into the Fields adjoining the City, to afford what little Help we could. But oh! the Deſolation! To attempt to aſſuage that Accumulation of Deſtitution by our trivial Means ſeemed like eſſaying to ſubdue the Fire with a Cup of Water: yet we know that every Little helps; and that even a Cup of Water, to the thirſty Man who drinks it, quenches not his Thirſt the leſs, that Thouſands beſide are parched with Drought. And thus, by Analogy, concerning the general Amount of human Suffering ſurrounding us at all

all Times, which the Wife of a *Whitechapel* Parſon is perhaps as well qualified to ſpeak of as any one elſe—We need not be diſcouraged from aiding any, becauſe we cannot ſuccour all; ſince the Relief afforded is as grateful to him who has it, as though *all* were relieved, which it is not God's Will that any ſhould have Power to accompliſh.

By the End of the Month this terrible Calamity was over-paſt; at leaſt, as far as we had Anything to do with it, though we continued to give Shelter to poor, ruined Houſeholders as long as the Parſonage was our own. The Gentleman who ſucceeded my dear Huſband ſeemed a benevolent Sort of Man, a little pompous, maybe, but tenderly diſpoſed towards the Poor.

And now, Everything being ſettled, we ſold ſome of our old Furniture,

Furniture, and ſent down the Reſt, with Miſtreſs *Peach*, by the Wagon. And my dear Huſband and I entered *Bucklands* exactly as we had left it, and on the very ſame Horſe; I in my cherry-colour Habit, that was as freſh as on my Wedding-day. And here we have been ever ſince; and he calls me his right Hand, and ſays my Attention to all his ſecular Affairs leaves his Mind at Liberty to purſue his Duties and Studies without Diſtraction—and that I underſtand the Poor even better than he does—and that I am his beſt Counſellor, his deareſt Friend, his pleaſanteſt Companion, his darling *Cherry!*—Yes; he calls me, and I believe he thinks me all this: and as for *my* being happy in *him* . . . I ſhould think ſo, indeed!

FINIS.

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Manning, Anne

Cherry & Violet

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